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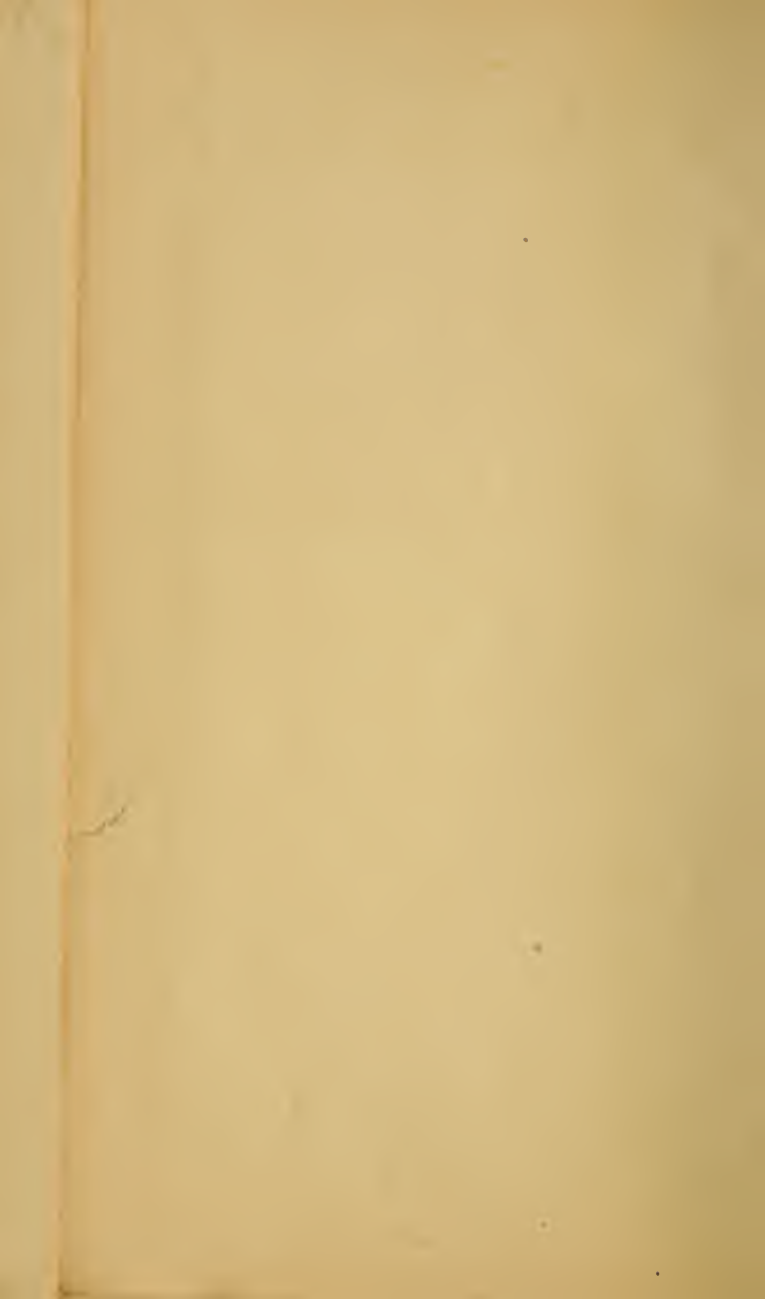
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THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
SOUTH AMERICA,

133  
1931

FROM  
THE DISCOVERY OF THE NEW WORLD BY COLUMBUS,

TO  
THE CONQUEST OF PERU BY PIZARRO;

INTERSPERSED WITH AMUSING ANECDOTES, AND CONTAINING A MINUTE  
DESCRIPTION OF THE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS, DRESS,  
ORNAMENTS, AND MODE OF WARFARE OF

THE INDIANS.



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of France; the Life of Napoleon, &c.



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THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
SOUTH AMERICA.

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CHAPTER I.

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.—DISCOVERY OF MADEIRA, THE  
CAPE DE VERD ISLANDS, AND THE AZORES.—BIOGRAPHY OF  
COLUMBUS.

THE omnipotent ruler of the universe has developed, with admirable economy, the secrets of the material world. Had a full knowledge of its organization been imparted, at the time of the earliest formation of society, the blessings of life would have been greatly lessened. Man would have been deprived of one of the chief sources of earthly happiness,—the daily employment of his mental faculties, in contemplating the inexhaustible variety of elements of which matter is composed, and the vast extent of space which has gradually been unfolded. Certain periods in the revolution of time, have been signally prolific in extraordinary events. The fifteenth century is distinguished by two remarkable occurrences,—the invention of the modern art of printing, and the discovery of the great western continent, now universally called America. The former was the means of spreading over civilized Europe, the knowledge already accumulated by the human mind, and of exciting men to further inquiries after truth, and to further examination of the principles of civil and religious liberty; the latter opened a field for the exercise of individual and national enterprise, and afforded an asylum to all who preferred liberty of opinion in a foreign country, to mental slavery in their native land.

The spirit of geographical research was unusually excited by a wonderful discovery,—the polarity of the magnet, which eventuated in the construction of the mariner's compass, and more powerfully influenced navigation, than all the efforts of

preceding ages. The precise epoch of this discovery, we cannot satisfactorily ascertain. It is generally attributed to Gioia, a Neapolitan, and dated in the year 1302; but the supposition appears erroneous. Guyot de Provins, in a poem written about the year 1180, plainly alludes to the magnetic needle being then in common use; and the writings of many other authors coincide in establishing its previous introduction, and consequently in depriving the Neapolitan of any honour, further than having increased its utility by fixing it on a pivot, and enclosing it in a box.\* Seamen were now enabled to abandon their timid course along the shore, and fearlessly to launch into the wide bosom of the ocean. The first appearance of increasing confidence, may be dated from the voyages of the Spaniards, to the Canary Islands. These, which many centuries before the Christian era, had been visited by the Carthaginians, were again discovered, about the middle of the fourteenth century, by the seamen of Spain: but the genius of naval enterprise was not, at this period, fully excited; as navigation seems not to have then extended beyond the limits which circumscribed it before the downfall of the Roman empire.

The next considerable effort was made by the seamen of Portugal. In 1420, they sailed to Madeira; (to which they were directed by its previous accidental discovery by an Englishman;) in 1446, they discovered the Cape de Verd islands; and in 1449, the Azores. When prosecuting their researches along the shores of Africa, they ventured to cross the equinoctial line; equally pleased and astonished, on finding that region not only habitable, but populous and fertile. As they advanced towards the south, they found, that, instead of extending, according to the doctrine of Ptolemy, it appeared to contract its breadth, towards the east. This unexpected discovery induced them to credit the ancient Phenician voyages around Africa, which had long been deemed fabulous; and led them to conceive hopes, that, by following the same track, they might arrive at the East Indies, and engross, for a while, a traffic which had always been so eagerly desired. The attainment of this object was entrusted to Bartholomew Diaz. After advancing a thousand miles further than any of his predecessors, exposed to violent tempests, mutinies, and famines, this experienced officer, distinguished alike for his sagacity, fortitude, and perseverance, at last beheld that lofty promon-

\* The latitude was then taken by an instrument called the astrolabe.



tory which terminates Africa on the south. But to behold it, was all that he could accomplish: the violence of the winds, and the turbulent spirit of his men, compelled him to return.

The vast length of this voyage, with the furious storms encountered by Diaz, so alarmed and intimidated the Portuguese, that some time was required to prepare their minds for the prosecution and accomplishment of their great design—the passing of that southern promontory, called, by the king of Portugal, the Cape of Good Hope. In the interval, an event occurred, no less extraordinary than unexpected, which forms the subject of this history—the discovery of a new continent, situated in the west.

The honour of accomplishing that sublime exploit was gained by Christopher Columbus. This illustrious navigator was born at Genoa, in the year 1435. He was the eldest of four children, having two brothers, Bartholomew and Diego, and one sister, of whom nothing is now known, except that she was married to a person in obscure life, named Giacomo Bovarello. He was well qualified, both by nature and education, to become distinguished on the ocean. Ardently inclined towards that element, he went to sea at the age of fourteen; and, in a few years, visited the coast of Iceland, and advanced several degrees within the polar circle. He once commanded a vessel of war belonging to the king of Naples, and was employed in a perilous enterprise—to cut out a galley from the port of Tunis. There is an interval of many years, during which we have only a few shadowy traces of Columbus. He is supposed to have been then principally engaged in the Mediterranean, and the Levant; sometimes in voyages of commerce; sometimes, in warlike contests between the Italian states; at other times, in pious and predatory expeditions against the Mahometans. After a variety of adventures, serving more to enlarge his knowledge than to increase his fortune, he went to Lisbon, a city in which there lived many of his countrymen, and where, having married, he fixed his residence. He was then in the full vigour of life, and of an engaging appearance. He was tall, well-formed, muscular, and of an elevated and dignified demeanour. His visage was long, his complexion fair and freckled, and inclined to ruddy; his nose aquiline, his eyes light-gray and sparkling, and his whole countenance had an air of authority. His hair, in his youthful days, was of a light colour, but care and trouble soon turned it gray, and at thirty years of age, it was entirely

white. He was moderate in his diet, and simple in his apparel; eloquent in discourse; engaging and affable with strangers, and of an amiableness and suavity in domestic life, which strongly attached his household to his person.

The matrimonial alliance formed by Columbus, did not weaken his early attachment to the sea. His wife was a daughter of Bartholomew de Perestrello, who had been one of the most distinguished navigators under Prince Henry, and had first carried the Portuguese to Madeira. Columbus obtained possession of his journals; made a voyage to Madeira, and traded, for many years, with the Canaries, the Azores, the coast of Guinea, and all the other places discovered by the Portuguese on the continent of Africa.

The great object of the Portuguese, at that period, as already narrated, was to discover a passage to the East Indies. But they searched for it only by steering towards the south, in the hope of accomplishing their wishes by turning to the east, when they had reached the southern extremity of Africa; a course of so great extent, that a voyage to India must have appeared equally arduous and uncertain. Stimulated by this reflection, after comparing the observations of modern navigators with the conjectures of the ancients, Columbus at length concluded, that by sailing directly towards the west, across the Atlantic Ocean, new countries, which it was likely formed a part of the great continent of Asia, must infallibly be discovered. The spherical figure of the earth was known; its magnitude, with some degree of accuracy, ascertained; Sir John Mandeville, a celebrated English traveller, had already, from astronomical demonstration, asserted that it might be circumnavigated. It was evident that the continents of Europe, Asia, and Africa, formed but a small portion of the terraqueous globe; it seemed rational, that the vast, unexplored space, was not entirely covered with water, but was occupied, in some measure, by countries fit for the residence of man. These deductions were not drawn merely from conjecture. Timber, artificially carved, had been seen floating, at an unusual distance, in the ocean: to the west of the Madeira isles, there had been found another piece, fashioned in the same manner, brought by the same wind; and canes, of an enormous size, resembling those described by ancient naturalists, as peculiar to the Indies. Trees had been frequently driven upon the Azores; and at one time the dead bodies of two men, differing in their features from the inhabitants of Europe, Africa, or Asia.



Confiding fully in the truth of his system, Columbus was impatient to prove it by experiment. But it was necessary to procure the patronage and aid of a sovereign state. As long absence had not abated his affection for his native country, he wished that Genoa should enjoy the advantages likely to accrue from his ingenuity and perseverance, and accordingly submitted his ideas to the senate. He had, however, resided so many years in foreign countries, that the Genoese were unacquainted with his character; and unable, rightly to comprehend the principles on which he founded his expectations of success, they rejected his proposals, as the offspring of a disordered imagination.

The perseverance of Columbus was not yet exhausted. Though his sensibility was wounded, his resolution was not shaken by this repulse. He made his next overture to the king of Portugal; who, he considered had the second claim to his services, by reason of his having so long resided in his dominions. John listened to his proposals with attention, and treated them with respect. He appointed three eminent cosmographers to examine the merits of his interesting plan: but these individuals, after drawing from Columbus the minutest particulars of his design, basely conspired to defraud the ingenious seaman of his expected glory, and the king adopted their perfidious counsel. A caravel was despatched, under the ostensible pretext of carrying provisions to the Cape de Verd islands, but with private instructions to pursue the route designated in the papers of Columbus. Having departed from these islands, the caravel steered westward, for several days. The weather became stormy, and the pilots having no zeal to animate them to persevere, and seeing continually before them only an immense waste of rolling waters, lost all courage to proceed. They returned to the Cape de Verd islands, and thence to Lisbon, execrating the project, as extravagant in its extent, and irrational in its conception.

Columbus resolved to hold no further intercourse with a sovereign and people capable of so flagrant treachery. He proceeded instantly to Spain, that he might lay his plan before Ferdinand and Isabella; at the same time, increasing the chances of success, by sending his brother Bartholomew to England, in order to negotiate with Henry VII., who was reported to be one of the most sagacious and enterprising monarchs of the age.

Though Spain was then engaged in a serious war with Granada, the last of the Moorish kingdoms in that country,

yet Ferdinand and Isabella treated Columbus with so much regard, as to submit the consideration of his plan to a confidential minister, Ferdinand de Talavera. It would be tedious and uninteresting to enumerate all the objections offered to his scheme. Some insisted that he would find the ocean of infinite extent; others, that if he persisted in steering to the west, beyond a certain point, the convex figure of the earth would prevent his return; and that he must inevitably perish, in the vain attempt to open a communication between the two opposite hemispheres, which nature had for ever disjoined.\*

1492. More than seven years had elapsed, since the date of his first application to Ferdinand and Isabella, when Columbus, mortified by the bitterest disappointment, and feeling the most painful solicitude on account of not having received any information from his brother Bartholomew, withdrew from the Spanish court, intending to visit England, himself, as his last resource. His departure was prevented by a fortunate occurrence. About that time, Granada surrendered, and Ferdinand and Isabella, in triumphal pomp, took possession of a city, the reduction of which extirpated a foreign enemy from the heart of their dominions. Quintanella and Santangel, the vigilant and discerning patrons of Columbus, now made another effort in behalf of their ingenious friend, and their arguments, urged at so favourable a juncture, were successful. The doubts and fears of Isabella were dispelled; she ordered Columbus to be recalled, and declared her resolution of employing him on his own terms.

On the 17th of April, a capitulation or contract with Columbus was signed; the chief articles of which, were: "1. Ferdinand and Isabella, as sovereigns of the ocean, constituted Columbus their high admiral, in all the seas, islands, and continents, which should be discovered by his industry; and stipulated that he and his heirs for ever should enjoy the office, with the same powers and prerogatives which belonged to the high admiral of Castile, within the limits of his jurisdiction. 2. They appointed Columbus their viceroy, in all the islands and continents which he should discover; but if, for the better administration of affairs, it should hereafter be necessary to establish a separate governor in any of those countries, they authorised Columbus to name three persons, of whom they would choose

\* Thus far, the narrative is substantially taken from the History of the United States, by the author of this work.

one for that office; and the dignity of viceroy, with all its immunities, was likewise to be hereditary in the family of Columbus. 3. They granted to Columbus and his heirs for ever, the tenth of the free profits accruing from the productions and commerce of the countries which he should discover. 4. They declared, that if any controversy or law-suit arose, with respect to any mercantile transaction, in the countries which should be discovered, it should be determined by the sole authority of Columbus, or of judges to be appointed by him."

Though the name of Ferdinand appears conjoined with that of Isabella, in this transaction, his distrust of Columbus was still so violent, that he refused to have any participation in the enterprise, as king of Arragon. As the whole expense of the expedition was to be defrayed by the crown of Castile, Isabella reserved for her subjects of that kingdom, of which she was ~~sav~~erign in her own right, the exclusive benefits which might arise from its success.



## CHAPTER II.

### THE FIRST VOYAGE OF COLUMBUS.

HE DISCOVERS THE ISLANDS OF ST. SALVADOR, ST. MARY, EXUMA, ISABELLA, CUBA, AND HAYTI OR HISPANIOLA.

ISABELLA had ordered the ships, of which Columbus was to take the command, to be fitted out in the port of Palos, a small maritime town in the province of Andalusia. The chief of his associates were three brothers, named Pinzon, of considerable wealth, and of great experience in naval affairs, who were willing to hazard their lives and fortunes in the expedition.

The armament consisted of only three vessels. Two of them were light barques, called caravels, not superior to river and coasting craft of the present day; and only one of the three vessels was decked. The largest was commanded by Columbus, as admiral; who gave it the name of Santa Maria, out of respect for the Virgin Mary: the second in burthen, named the Pinta, was under the command of Martin Alonzo Pin-



zon, his brother Francis being pilot: the third, called the *Nigna*, under the direction of Vincent Yanez Pinzon. This little squadron was victualled for twelve months, and had on board ninety men, mostly sailors, together with a few adventurers who followed the fortune of Columbus; and some gentlemen of Isabella's court, whom she had appointed to accompany him.

As Columbus was deeply impressed with sentiments of religion, he would not set out upon an expedition so hazardous, and of which one great object was professed to be the extension of the Christian faith, without imploring publicly the guidance and protection of Heaven. With all the persons under his command, he marched in solemn procession to the monastery of Rabida; where, after confessing their sins, they received the sacrament, and joined in prayers for its success.

The next morning, being Friday, the 3d day of August, 1492, Columbus set sail, a little before sun-rise. His departure was witnessed by a vast crowd of spectators, who sent up their supplications to Heaven, for the prosperous issue of the voyage, which they wished, rather than expected to be accomplished. He steered directly for the Canary islands, and arrived there without the occurrence of any accident that would deserve notice on any other occasion. But, in a voyage of so much solicitude and importance, the most trifling incident was an object of attention. The day after she left the harbour, the rudder of the *Pinta* broke loose; and that accident alarmed the superstitious crew, as a certain omen of the disastrous issue of the expedition. Even in the short voyage to the Canaries, which occupied only about six days, the ships were found to be so crazy and ill appointed, as to be very inadequate to a navigation expected to be both long and full of peril. Columbus refitted them, however, as well as circumstances would admit; and, having obtained a supply of fresh provisions, he took his departure from Gomera, one of the most westerly of the Canary islands, on the sixth of September.

Here, the voyage of discovery may properly be said to begin. Holding his course due west, Columbus immediately left the usual track of navigation, and stretched into seas unfrequented and unknown. The first day being calm, he made little way; but on the second, he lost sight of the Canaries; and many of the sailors, already dejected and dismayed, when they contemplated the boldness of the under-

taking, began to beat their breasts and to shed tears, as if they were never again to behold land. Columbus comforted them with assurances of success, and the prospect of immense wealth; and, happily for himself, as well as for the country by which he was employed, he possessed a thorough knowledge of mankind, an insinuating address, a patient perseverance, a perfect government of his own passions, and the talent of acquiring an ascendance over those of other men. He regulated every thing by his sole authority; he superintended the execution of every order; and, allowing himself only a few hours for sleep, he was at all other times on deck. The sounding line, or instruments for observation, were continually in his hands. He attended to the motions of tides and currents, watched the flight of birds, the appearance of fishes, of sea-weeds, and of every thing that floated on the waves. As the length of the voyage could not fail of alarming sailors habituated only to short excursions, Columbus endeavoured to conceal from them the real progress of his vessel. Though they had run eighteen leagues, on the second day after they left Gomera, he reported that they had advanced only fifteen; and he uniformly employed the same artifice, during the whole voyage. On the 14th of September, eight days after his departure from Gomera, the fleet was more than two hundred leagues west of the Canary islands, at a greater distance from land than any Spaniard had ever been before. They were now struck with a phenomenon, no less astonishing than new. Their magnetic needle did not point exactly to the polar star, but varied towards the west; and, as they proceeded, this variation increased. This appearance, now grown familiar to us, though like the polarity of the magnet, it still continues one of the mysteries of nature, filled the companions of Columbus with terror. They were now in a boundless and unknown ocean; nature itself seemed altered, and the only guide on which they had depended, was about to desert them. But Columbus, with no less quickness than ingenuity, invented a reason for this appearance; which, though it did not satisfy himself, seemed so rational to them, that it dispelled their fears, or silenced their complaints.

Continuing to steer due west, he came within the region of the trade-wind, which blows invariably from east to west, between the tropics and a few degrees beyond them, in the temperate zones. He advanced before this steady gale, with

so uniform a rapidity, that it was seldom necessary to shift a sail. When about four hundred leagues to the west of the Canaries, he found the sea so covered with weeds, that it resembled a meadow of vast extent; and in some places they were so thick, as to retard the motion of the vessels.\* This strange appearance occasioned new alarm. The sailors imagined that they had now arrived at the utmost boundary of the navigable ocean; that these floating weeds would obstruct their further progress, and concealed dangerous rocks, or a large tract of land, which had sunk, in that place, by some unknown cause. Columbus endeavoured to persuade them, that what had alarmed, ought rather to have encouraged them, and was to be considered a sign of approaching land. At the same time, a brisk gale arose, and carried them forward. Several birds were seen hovering about the ship, and directing their flight towards the west. The desponding crew resumed some degree of spirit, and began to entertain fresh hopes.

On the first of October, according to the reckoning of Columbus, they were seven-hundred-and-seventy leagues to the westward of the Canaries; but, lest his men should be intimidated by the extraordinary length of the navigation, he reported that they had proceeded only five-hundred-and-eighty-four; and, fortunately for Columbus, neither his own pilot, nor the pilots of the other vessels, had skill sufficient to correct this error, and discover the deceit. They had now been about twenty-five days at sea: they had proceeded far beyond what former navigators had attempted, or considered possible; the appearances of land had been altogether illusive, and their prospect of success seemed as distant as ever. From secret murmurings, they proceeded to open complaints: they contended that it was necessary to think of returning to Spain, while their crazy vessels were yet in a condition to oppose the waves; but they expressed their fears that the attempt would prove vain, as the wind, which had hitherto been so favourable to their course, must render it impossible to sail in the opposite direction. All agreed that Columbus should be compelled, by force, to adopt a measure on which their common safety depended, and some of the more audacious proposed to throw him into the sea, and report, on their arrival in Spain, that he had fallen overboard, while contem-

\* This vegetable substance is now known as the Gulf-weed.



plating the stars, and the signs of the heavens; a fabrication which no one would have either the inclination or the means to controvert.

Columbus was not insensible of his perilous situation. He retained, however, entire presence of mind, and affected to be ignorant of their machinations. Notwithstanding the agitation and solicitude of his own mind, he appeared with a cheerful countenance, like one satisfied with his progress, and confident of success. Sometimes, he employed all the arts of insinuation to soothe his men: sometimes, he endeavoured to work upon their ambition or avarice, by magnificent descriptions of the fancied wealth which they were about to acquire: on other occasions, he assumed the tone of authority, and threatened them with vengeance from their sovereign, if, by their dastardly behaviour, they should defeat the glorious object of the voyage.

His words produced the desired effect. He assuaged their angry passions, and allayed their fears. As they proceeded, the indications of approaching land seemed more certain, and excited hope. The water became so smooth, that the sailors amused themselves by swimming about the vessels. Dolphins began to abound; and flying-fish, darting into the air, fell upon the decks. The birds began to appear in flocks, directing their flight towards the south-west. In imitation of the Portuguese navigators, who had been guided, in several of their discoveries, by the motion of birds, Columbus altered his course, from due west, towards that quarter whither they pointed their course. But, after proceeding for several days in this new direction, without any better success, having seen no object, during thirty days, except the sea and the arch of heaven, the hopes of his companions subsided, more rapidly than they had arisen, their fears renewed with additional force, and in every countenance there appeared impatience, rage, and despair. All sense of subordination was lost: the officers now combined with the private men: they assembled tumultuously on the deck, and required him instantly to return to Europe. Columbus perceived that it would be unavailing to have recourse to any of his former arts. Having been tried so often, they had lost their effect. It became necessary to soothe those passions which he could no longer control, and to yield to a torrent too impetuous to be checked. He promised solemnly to his men, that, provided they would accompany him, and obey his commands for three days longer, and during that time land were not

discovered, he would then abandon the enterprise, and direct his course to Spain.

This proposition did not appear to the sailors unreasonable. They acceded to the conditions proposed. Nor did Columbus hazard much, in confining himself to a term so short. The presages of discovering land, were now so numerous and promising, that he deemed them infallible. For some days, the sounding-lead had reached the bottom, and the soil which adhered to it, indicated the proximity of land. The flocks of birds increased, and were composed not only of sea-fowl, but also of small birds, of various colours, some of them such as sing in the fields, and could not be supposed to fly far from shore. Tunny fish played about the tranquil sea, and a heron, a pelican, and a duck, were seen, all bound in the same direction. The crew of the *Pinta* observed a green fish, of a kind which is found about rocks, also a cane floating, which seemed to have been newly cut, and likewise a piece of timber, artificially carved: the sailors on board the *Nigna*, picked up a branch of a tree with red berries, perfectly fresh: the clouds around the setting sun assumed a new appearance: the air had become more mild and warm, and, during night, the wind became unequal and variable, as if affected by the inequalities of an undulating shore. From all these symptoms, Columbus was so confident of being near land, that, on the evening of the 11th of October, after public prayers for success, he ordered the sails to be furled, and the ships to lie-to; keeping strict watch, lest they might happen to strike upon the shore, in the night.

During this interval of suspense and expectation, not a head was reclined to sleep. All remained on deck, with their eyes intently directed towards that quarter, where they hoped to discover the land which had been so long the object of their desires. Their hopes were at length realized. About ten o'clock, Columbus, standing on the forecastle, observed, at some distance, a light; and, at two in the morning, a gun, discharged by the *Pinta*, which had always been a little a-head of the other vessels, gave the joyful signal of LAND!

Every man now waited, in all the anguish of uncertainty and impatience, for the return of day. As soon as *Friday*, morning dawned, all doubts and fears were dispelled. *Oct. 12.* From every ship, an island was seen, about two leagues to the north, the flat and verdant fields of which, adorned with lofty woods, and watered by many rivulets, presented the appearance of a delightful country. The crew of



the *Pinta* instantly began the *Te Deum*, as a hymn of thanksgiving to God, and were joined by the seamen of the other vessels, with transports of congratulation, and tears of joy.

Seventy days had now elapsed, since Columbus had left Palos: six days were occupied in reaching the Canaries; twenty-eight, in refitting his vessels at those islands, and thirty-six from the time he took his departure from Gomera, until he discovered land.

The sun had no sooner risen, than all the boats were manned and armed. They rowed towards the island, with their colours displayed, with warlike music, and other military pomp. The coast was covered with a multitude of people, attracted by the novelty of the spectacle, and expressing wonder and astonishment in every gesture. Columbus was the first European who set foot in the New World which he had discovered. He was splendidly arrayed in scarlet, and held in his hand a naked sword. He was followed by his men, who, kneeling down, kissed the ground, which they had so long desired, but so little expected ever to behold. They next erected a crucifix, and prostrated themselves before it, returning thanks to Heaven, for the happy issue of the voyage. They then took solemn possession of the country, for the crown of Castile and Leon, with all the formality usually observed, on similar occasions, by the Portuguese.

The dress of the Spaniards, the comparative whiteness of their skins, their unshorn beards, their arms and armour, appeared to the natives strange and surprising: the vast machines in which they had traversed the ocean, which uttered a dreadful sound resembling thunder, accompanied with lightning and smoke, struck them with so much terror, that they viewed their new guests as a superior order of beings, and concluded that they were the children of the Sun, who had descended from the skies.

The Spaniards were hardly less amazed at the scene now before them. Every object was, in many respects, different from what they had been accustomed to behold in Europe. The inhabitants appeared in the simple innocence of nature, entirely naked. Their black hair, long and uncurled, floated on their shoulders, or was bound in tresses around their heads. They had no beards, a fashion different from what then prevailed in Europe, where, in every country, the hair was allowed to grow, either on the upper lip or chin. Their complexion was of a dusky copper-colour; their aspect gentle and timid. Their faces, and several parts of their bodies,

were fantastically painted with glowing colours. They were shy at first, through fear, but soon became familiar with the Spaniards; and joyfully received from them coloured caps, hawks' bells, glass beads, or other baubles; in return for which they gave such provisions as they had, and likewise parrots, of which great numbers were domesticated amongst them, and some cotton yarn, the only commodity of value that they could produce.

Towards evening, Columbus returned to his caravel. On the following morning, before the sun had risen, the shore was crowded with the natives, who, having lost all dread of what at first had appeared to them monsters of the deep, came swimming to the ships: others were carried in light barques, which they called *canoes*, formed out of the trunk of a single tree, hollowed, and capable of holding from one man to the number of forty or fifty. These, they managed dexterously with paddles; and, if overturned, they swam about entirely unconcerned, as if in their natural element, righting their canoes with great facility, and bailing out the water with a calabash.

Columbus now assumed the title of admiral and viceroy, and called the island which he had discovered San Salvador.\* It was called by the natives Guanahani, and is one of that large cluster of islands, now known as the Bahama Isles. It is situated more than three thousand miles west of Gomera, from which the squadron had taken its departure, and only four degrees south of that island; so little had Columbus deviated from the westerly course, which he had chosen as the most likely to conduct him to the object of his search.

He employed the next day in visiting the coasts of the island, and, from the universal poverty of the inhabitants, he perceived that this was not the rich country for which he sought. But, conformably to his theory concerning those regions of Asia which stretched towards the east, he concluded that San Salvador was one of the islands which geographers described as situated in the great ocean adjacent to India. Having observed that most of the people whom he had seen there, wore small plates of gold, by way of ornament, in their nostrils, he eagerly inquired where they got that precious metal. They pointed towards the south, and indicated that gold abounded in countries situated in that quarter. Thither, Columbus determined to direct his course.

\* Named, by the English, Cat Island,

He took with him seven of the natives of San Salvador, that, by acquiring the Spanish language, they might serve as interpreters and guides; and those innocent people considered it as a mark of distinction, when selected to accompany him.

In his progress, he saw several islands. He touched at three of the largest; to which, he gave the names of St. Mary, Fernandina,\* and Isabella. At this time, one of the Indians of San Salvador, who was on board the Nigna, seeing himself about to be carried away, by these strangers, far from his home, plunged into the sea, and swam to a large canoe, filled with natives. The boat of the caravel pursued; but the Indians skimmed along the surface of the sea with too much velocity to be overtaken, and, reaching the land, fled, like wild deer, to the woods. Shortly afterwards, a small canoe approached one of the ships, from a different part of the island, containing a single Indian, who came to offer a ball of cotton in exchange for hawks' bells. As he paused, when near the vessel, and feared to enter, some of the sailors leaped into the sea, and took him prisoner. This was not pleasing to Columbus. He was desirous of dispelling any terror or distrust, that might have been awakened in the island, by the pursuit of the fugitives, or by the Indian guide who had escaped; thinking it of the utmost importance to conciliate the good will of the natives, for the benefit of future voyagers. He ordered the captive to be brought to him. The poor Indian was led trembling with fear, and humbly offered his ball of cotton, as a gift. The admiral received him with the utmost benignity, and, declining his offering, put a coloured cap upon his head, strings of green beads around his arms, and hawks' bells in his ears, then, ordering him and his ball of cotton to be placed in the canoe, dismissed him, astonished and overjoyed.

Having landed the next morning at Fernandina, Columbus found the inhabitants more ingenious and intelligent than those of the preceding islands. Some of the women wore small coverings, or aprons of cotton cloth, and others had mantles of the same fabric; but for the most part, they were entirely naked. Their habitations were very simple; being in the form of a pavilion or high circular tent, constructed of branches of trees, covered with reeds and palm leaves. They were kept very clean and neat, and sheltered under beautiful and spreading trees. For beds, they had nets of

\* Now called Exuma.



cotton, extended between two posts, which they called *hamacs*, a name since universally adopted amongst seamen.

Continuing his course to the south, on the 28th of October, Columbus discovered a country which appeared very extensive; but he was uncertain whether it might prove a part of the continent, or an island. The natives of San Salvador whom he had on board, called it Cuba: Columbus named it Juanna. Having entered the mouth of a large river with his squadron, all the inhabitants fled to the mountains, as he approached the shore. But, as he resolved to careen his ships in that place, he sent some Spaniards, together with one of the people of San Salvador, to view the interior of the country. They advanced above sixty miles from the shore, observed that the soil was more fertile and better cultivated, than any that they had hitherto discovered: they saw many scattered cottages, besides one village, containing more than a thousand inhabitants; found the people more intelligent than the natives of San Salvador, and were presented with a certain root, the taste of which resembled roasted chesnuts; and also a singular species of corn, called maize: there seemed to be no four-footed animals in the country, except a species of dogs which could not bark, and a creature resembling a rabbit, but of a much smaller size; and they observed some ornaments of gold amongst the people, but of no great value.

The natives informed Columbus, that the gold, of which they made their ornaments, was found in *Cubanican*. By this word, they meant the middle or inland part of Cuba: but, being ignorant of their language, and his thoughts running unremittingly upon his own theory concerning the discovery of the East Indies, Columbus was led, by the resemblance of sound, to suppose that they spoke of the *Grand Khan*; and imagined that the opulent kingdom of Cathay, described by Marco Polo, was not very remote. He concluded that he must have reached the main land of India, and that he could not be far distant from Mangi and Cathay, the ultimate destination of his voyage. The prince who reigned over this country, must be some oriental potentate of importance: he resolved, therefore, to despatch a present to the monarch, with one of the letters of recommendation from the Castilian sovereigns; and after visiting his dominions, to proceed to the capital of Cathay, the residence of the Grand Khan. For this mission, he chose two Spaniards, Rodrigo de Jerez, and Luis de Torres; the latter a converted

Jew, acquainted with Hebrew and Chaldaic, and even a little with Arabic; some one of which languages, Columbus supposed might be known to this oriental prince. Two Indians were sent with them as guides. The ambassadors were furnished with strings of beads, and other trinkets, to defray their travelling expenses, and six days were allowed them to go and return.

"Many, at the present day," observes an elegant historian, "will smile at this embassy to a naked savage chieftain, in the interior of Cuba, in mistake for an Asiatic monarch; but such was the singular nature of this voyage, a continual series of golden dreams, and all interpreted by the delusive volume of Marco Polo."

While awaiting the return of his ambassadors, Columbus ordered the ships to be thoroughly repaired. He employed himself also in collecting information respecting the country, and the day after their departure, he ascended the river, in boats, the distance of two leagues, until he came to fresh water. For several days, he was excited by reports of cinnamon trees, and nutmegs, and rhubarb, being found; but, on examination, they all proved fallacious. He showed the natives specimens of those and various other spices and drugs, which he had brought with him from Spain; and he understood from them that those highly valued commodities were to be found, in abundance, towards the south-east. He showed them gold and pearls, also; whereupon, several of the old Indians informed him, that there was a country where the natives wore ornaments composed of those substances, in their ears, and around their neck, arms, and ankles. They mingled, however, great extravagancies with their imperfect accounts; describing nations, at a distance, who had only one eye; others who had the heads of dogs, and were cannibals, who cut the throats of their prisoners, and sucked their blood.

In the course of their researches, in quest of the luxuries of commerce, they met with the potato, an humble root, little valued at the time; and beheld several of the natives walking about with fire-brands in their hands, and a certain dried herb, now called tobacco, which they rolled up in a leaf, and, lighting one end, put the other into their mouths, and continued puffing out the smoke.

The return of the envoys destroyed many splendid fancies of Columbus, about the Asiatic prince and his capital. He had been cruising in a region of enchantment, over which

his imagination exercised a magic power. Though delighted with the natural beauty, he was disappointed as regarded the metallic riches of the country. Notwithstanding that he had visited almost every harbour, from Porto del Principe, on the north coast of Cuba, to the eastern extremity of the island, he did not find gold in so large a quantity, as was sufficient to satisfy either the avarice of his followers, or the expectations of the court to which he was to return. The people of the country pointed towards the east, where there was situated an island, called, by them, Hayti, in which that metal was more abundant. Columbus ordered his squadron to bend its course thither; but Martin Alonzo Pinzon, impatient to be the first to take possession of the expected treasures, quitted his companions, regardless of all the admiral's signals to shorten sail.

Retarded by contrary winds, Columbus did not reach Hayti until the 6th of December. He called the harbour which he first entered, St. Nicholas, and the island itself, in honour of the kingdom by which he had been employed, Hispaniola. It is now generally called Hayti and St. Domingo. As he could neither meet with the Pinta, nor have any intercourse with the inhabitants, who fled, in great consternation, to the woods, he soon quitted St. Nicholas, and, sailing along the northern coast, entered another harbour, which he called Conception. Here, he was more fortunate: his people overtook a woman who was flying from them; and, after treating her with great gentleness, dismissed her with a present of such toys as they knew were most valued in those regions. The description which she gave to her countrymen, of the humanity and wonderful qualities of the strangers; their admiration of the trinkets which she showed them, and their eagerness to participate in the same favours, removed all their fears, and induced many of them to return to the harbour. They possessed gold in greater abundance than their neighbours, which they readily exchanged for bells, beads, or pins.

Here, Columbus was visited by a prince or *cazique* of the country. He appeared with all the pomp known amongst a simple people; being carried in a sort of palanquin, on the shoulders of four men, and attended by two hundred of his subjects, who served him with great respect. He gave Columbus a girdle of curious workmanship, and some thin plates of gold; receiving, in return, presents of small value in the eye of a European, but highly acceptable to him.

A small river emptied into Port Conception, after winding



through a delightful country. The coast abounded with fish, some of which even leaped into their boats. They cast their nets, therefore, and caught a large quantity, and amongst them several kinds similar to those of Spain. They heard also the notes of a bird which they mistook for the nightingale, and of several others to which they were accustomed; simple associations, which spoke to the heart, and reminded them of their Andalusian groves.

Having now become more familiar with the Spaniards, the natives conducted them to their houses, and set before them casava-bread, fish, roots, and various kinds of fruit. Learning that they were fond of parrots, they brought great numbers of them, which they had domesticated, and indeed offered freely whatever they possessed. Hospitality, we are told, was with them a law of nature, universally observed: it was not necessary to be known, to receive its succours; every house was as open to the stranger, as his own.—“True it is,” writes Columbus, “that, after they felt confidence, and lost their fear of us, they were so liberal of what they possessed, that it would not be believed by those who had not seen it. If any thing were asked of them, they never said no; but rather gave it cheerfully, and showed as much amity as if they gave their very hearts; and, whether the thing were of great or of little price, they were contented with whatever was given in return. In all these islands, it appears to me that the common men have but one wife; but they give twenty to their chieftain or king. The women seem to work more than the men; and I have not been able to ascertain whether they possess individual property; but rather think that whatever one has, all the rest share, especially in articles of food.”—“It is certain,” observes a cotemporary historian,\* “that the land amongst these people is as common as the sun and water; and that ‘mine and thine,’ the seeds of all mischief, have no place with them. They are content with so little, that, in so large a country, they have rather superfluity than scarceness; so that they seem to live in the golden world without toil, living in open gardens, not intrenched with dykes, divided with hedges, or defended by walls. They deal truly, one with another, without law, without books, and without judges. They take him for an evil and mischievous man, who feeleth pleasure in doing hurt to another; and notwithstanding they delight not in su-

\* Peter Martyr.

perfluities, yet they provide for the increase of such roots whereof they make their bread, contented with such simple diet, whereby health is preserved, and disease avoided."

Before leaving Port Conception, Columbus ordered a large cross to be erected in the centre of the village; and, from the readiness with which the Indians assisted, and their prompt imitation of the Spaniards in their acts of adoration, he inferred that it would be easy to convert them all to christianity.

Still intent on discovering the mines which yielded gold, Columbus interrogated all the natives with whom he had any intercourse, concerning their situation. They concurred in pointing out a mountainous country, which they called *Cibao*, at some distance from the sea, and further to the east. Struck with the sound, which appeared to him the same with *Cipango*, the name by which Marco Polo, and others who had travelled in the east, distinguished the island of Japan, he no longer doubted of the vicinity of the countries which he had discovered, to the remote parts of Asia; and accordingly directed his course towards the east. He entered a commodious harbour, which he called St. Thomas, and found that district subject to a powerful cazique, named Guacanahari; who, as he afterwards learned, was one of the five sovereigns amongst whom the whole island was divided. He immediately sent to Columbus a messenger, who, in the cazique's name delivered to him, as a present, a mask, curiously fashioned, with the ears, nose, and mouth, of beaten gold, and invited him to the place of his residence, now called Cape Français, and also Cape Henry, some leagues towards the east. Columbus deputed some of his officers to visit the prince. They returned with so favourable an account, both of the country and the people, as made Columbus impatient of that interview with Guacanahari, to which he had been invited.

For this purpose, he sailed from St. Thomas, on the 24th of December, with a fair wind, and the sea perfectly calm; and, as amidst the multiplicity of his occupations, he had not closed his eyes for two days, he retired at midnight, in order to take some repose, having committed the helm to the pilot, with strict injunctions not to quit it for a moment. But his prudent instructions were disobeyed. Dreading no danger, the pilot carelessly left the helm to an inexperienced boy, and the ship, being carried away by a current, was dashed against a rock. The violence of the shock awoke Colum-



bus. When he reached the deck, all there was confusion and despair. He alone retained presence of mind. He ordered some of the sailors to take a boat, and carry out an anchor astern; but, instead of obeying, they rowed off towards the Nigna, which was distant about half a league. He then ordered the masts to be cut away, in order to lighten the ship, but all his endeavours were now too late: the vessel opened near the keel, and filled so fast with water, that her loss was inevitable. The timely assistance of boats from the Nigna, enabled the crew to save their lives. As soon as the islanders heard of this disaster, they crowded to the shore, headed by their prince, Guacanahari, and, instead of taking advantage of the distress in which they beheld the Spaniards, they lamented their misfortune with tears, and assisted them in saving their property from the wreck.

At this time, a canoe arrived from another part of the island, bringing pieces of gold, to be exchanged for hawks' bells. Nothing was so highly valued by the natives, as these toys. They were extravagantly fond of the dances which they sometimes performed to the cadence of certain songs, accompanied by the sound of a kind of drum, made from the trunk of a tree, and the rattling of hollow bits of wood; but, when they hung their hawks' bells about their persons, and heard their clear musical sound, responding to their movements as they danced, nothing could exceed their wild delight.

Guacanahari invited Columbus to his house. He set before him a repast, as choice as his simple means afforded, consisting of coneys, fish, and roots, and the various fruits with which the island abounded. The generous cazique did every thing in his power, to honour his guest, and cheer him under his misfortune; showing a warmth of sympathy, yet delicacy of attention, which could not have been expected from his savage state. After the collation, he conducted Columbus to the beautiful groves which surrounded his residence, attended by more than a thousand of the natives, who performed several of their national games and dances, which Guacanahari had ordered, to amuse the melancholy of his interesting guest.

He displayed also the natural munificence of his spirit, by distributing various presents amongst the attendants of Columbus; conducting himself, in all things, in a manner that would have done honour to a prince in civilized life.

Whatever trifles Columbus gave, in return, were regarded

as celestial gifts. "The Indians," observes a venerable author,\* "in admiring any article of European manufacture, continually repeated the word *Turey*, which, in their language, signifies Heaven. They pretended to distinguish the different qualities of gold by the smell: in the same way, when any article of tin, of silver, or other white metal was given to them, to which they were unaccustomed, they smelled it, and declared it *turey* of excellent quality, giving, in exchange, pieces of the finest gold. Every thing, indeed, from the hands of a Spaniard was precious in their eyes; a rusty piece of iron, an end of a strap, a head of a nail, every thing had an occult and supernatural value, and smell of *turey*."

The condition of Columbus was now such, that he stood in need of consolation. He had hitherto procured no intelligence of the *Pinta*, nor did he any longer indulge a hope of meeting her, in those seas. There remained only one vessel, the smallest of his squadron, to carry back his crew to Europe. He resolved to leave a part of his men in the island, that, by residing there, they might learn the language of the natives, examine the nature of the country, search for mines, and prepare for the commodious reception of the colony, with which he proposed to return.

His men having approved of the design, it remained only to obtain the consent of Guacanahari; whose unsuspecting simplicity soon presented a favourable opportunity of proposing it. Having expressed some curiosity to know the cause which had induced the islanders to fly, with so great precipitation, on the approach of his ships, Columbus was informed by the cazique, that the country was much infested by the incursions of certain people, whom he called Caribbeans, and represented as inhabiting several islands to the south-east. These he described as a fierce and warlike race of men, who delighted in blood, and devoured the flesh of their prisoners; and, as the Spaniards, at their first appearance, were supposed to be Caribbeans, whom the natives durst not face in battle, they had recourse to their usual mode of securing their safety, by flying to the woods. Columbus promptly used this information to favour his design. He instantly offered the cazique the aid of the Spaniards, to repel his enemies: he engaged to take him and his people under the protection of the powerful monarch whom he served; and offered to leave in the island as great a number of his men as would be suffi-

\* Las Casas.

cient, not only to defend the inhabitants against future incursions, but to avenge their past wrongs. The credulous prince eagerly embraced the proposal. The ground was marked out for a small fort, which Columbus called *La Navidad*, or the Nativity, because he had landed there on Christmas-day. In ten days, the work was finished. It was surrounded by a deep ditch, the ramparts were fortified by palisades, and furnished with cannon saved from the admiral's ship.

Columbus appointed thirty-eight of his people to remain on the island, and intrusted the command to *Diego de Arado*. He strictly enjoined them to avoid giving offence to the natives, by any violence or exaction; to cultivate the friendship of *Guacanahari*, but not to put themselves in his power, by straggling in small parties, and marching too far from the fort; and he promised soon to revisit them, with a reinforcement of so much strength as would enable them to take full possession of that country.

He left *Navidad* on the 4th of January, 1493, and, steering towards the east, discovered and gave names to most of the harbours on the northern coast of the island. On the 6th, he descried the *Pinta*, and soon overtook her, after a separation of more than six weeks. *Pinzon* endeavoured to justify his conduct, by pretending that he had been driven from his course by stress of weather, and prevented from returning by contrary winds. Though Columbus still suspected his perfidious intentions, and well knew that what he urged in his defence was frivolous, as well as false, he was so sensible that this was not the proper time for exercising any high strain of authority, that, unsatisfactory as was *Pinzon's* apology, he admitted it, without hesitation, and restored him to favour.

They continued coasting along the island, until they came to a beautiful headland, to which they gave the name of *Cape del Enamorado*, or the Lover's Cape, but which is at present known by the name of *Cape Caboon*. A little beyond this, they anchored in a vast bay, extending so far inland, that Columbus at first supposed it might be an arm of the sea, separating *Hispaniola* from some other land. Having gone on shore, they found the natives very different from the gentle and pacific people hitherto met by them on this island. The natives here were of a ferocious aspect, and of a turbulent and warlike deportment. They were hideously painted, and decorated with the feathers of parrots and other birds of gaudy plumage. They were armed with bows and arrows,



clubs, and formidable swords. Their bows were as long as those formerly used in England; their arrows were of slender reeds, pointed with hard wood, and sometimes tipped with bone, or with the tooth of a fish. Their swords were of palm-wood, nearly as hard and as heavy as iron; and capable, with one blow, of cleaving through a helmet, to the very brains.

But, notwithstanding they were thus prepared for combat, they made no attempt to molest the Spaniards; on the contrary, they sold to their visitors several of their weapons, and one of them was induced to go on board the admiral's ship. Having regaled the warrior in the manner most agreeable and captivating to savages, and made him various presents of articles most likely to excite the curiosity of his countrymen, Columbus sent him on shore, in the hope, through his favourable representation, to open a trade with them for gold. As the boat approached the land, more than fifty savages, armed with bows and arrows, war-clubs, and javelins, were observed lurking in the woods. On a word from the Indian in the boat, they laid aside their arms, and came forth to meet the Spaniards. The latter, in conformity with instructions from Columbus, endeavoured to trade with them for several of their weapons, to take, as curiosities, to Spain. They parted with two of their bows; but suddenly, either actuated by suspicion, or thinking to overpower this small band of strangers, they rushed to the place where they had left their arms, snatched them up, and returned with threatening looks, and provided with cords, as if to bind the Spaniards. The latter immediately attacked them, wounded two, and put the rest to flight, terrified at the flashing lustre, and keen edge of the European sabres.

This was the first contest that the Spaniards had with the islanders, and the first time that native blood was shed, by the white men, in the new world.

Hostility, however, soon ceased with this generous people. Their frank and bold spirit was evinced on the following day; when, a multitude appearing on the beach, Columbus sent a large party, well armed, on shore, in a boat. The natives immediately approached, as freely and confidently as if nothing had occurred. The cazique who ruled over the neighbouring country was present. He sent, to the boat, a string of beads, formed of small stones, or of the hard part of shells, which the Spaniards understood to be a token and assurance of amity: but they were not yet acquainted with the full

meaning of the symbol; which was the wampum-belt, the pledge of peace, held sacred amongst the Indians. The chieftain followed shortly afterwards, and, having entered the boat with only three attendants, was conveyed on board the caravel. This frank and confiding conduct was properly appreciated by Columbus: he received the cazique with cordial friendship, treated him with such dainties as his ship afforded, and, after exciting his amazement by her structure and implements of war, and making him and his attendants many presents, sent them to land, highly gratified by their entertainment.

From the condition of his ships, as well as the temper of his men, Columbus now found it necessary to hasten his return to Europe. On the 16th of January, he directed his course towards the north-east, and soon lost sight of land. He had on board some of the natives, whom he had taken from the different islands; and, besides the gold, which was the chief object of research, he had collected specimens of all the productions likely to become objects of commerce, as well as many unknown birds, and other natural curiosities, which might attract the attention of the learned, or excite the wonder of the people.

The voyage was prosperous, until the 14th of February, and he had advanced nearly five-hundred leagues across the Atlantic, when the wind began to rise. It continued to blow with increasing rage, and terminated in a furious hurricane. Every expedient was employed, that the naval skill of Columbus could devise, in order to save the ships. The painful solicitude felt by him cannot be described. He dreaded that all knowledge of his amazing discoveries was now to perish, and that his name would descend to posterity as that of a chimerical projector. He accordingly retired to his cabin, and wrote on parchment a short account of his voyage, and of the colony left by him at Navidad. Having wrapped this in an oil-cloth, which he enclosed in a cake of wax, he put it into a cask, carefully stopped, and threw it into the sea; in the hope that some fortunate accident might preserve a deposit, of so much importance to the world.

At length, the wind abated, the agitation of the waves subsided, and on the evening of the 15th, Columbus descried land. This, he soon discovered to be St. Mary's, one of the Azores, or Western Isles, subject to the crown of Portugal. There, after a violent contest with the governor, he obtained a supply of fresh provisions; and, having, as soon as the wea-

ther would permit, departed from the Azores, he steered for the coast of Spain; but, after having encountered another storm, little inferior to the former in violence, he was forced to take shelter in the river Tagus. On application to the king of Portugal, he was allowed to proceed, with his vessels, to Lisbon; and, notwithstanding the envy which it was natural for the Portuguese to feel, when they beheld another nation, not only rivalling, but eclipsing their fame in the field of discovery, Columbus was received with merited distinction. The king invited him to court, then held at Valparaiso, treated him with the highest respect, and listened to the account of his voyage with admiration, mingled with regret.

Impatient to return to Spain, Columbus remained only five days at Lisbon. On the 15th of March, he arrived in the port of Palos, seven months and eleven days from the time when he departed thence upon his voyage. The prosperous issue of his adventure, was quickly known by the inhabitants. The effusion of joy was unbounded. The bells were rung, the cannon fired: Columbus was received with royal honours, and all the people, in solemn procession, accompanied him and his crew to the church, where they returned thanks to Heaven, which had so wonderfully conducted and crowned with success, a voyage of greater length, and of more importance, than had been attempted in any former age.

On the evening of the same day, he had the satisfaction of seeing the *Pinta*, which the violence of the tempest had driven far to the north, enter the harbour. When he beheld the vessel of Columbus riding at anchor, and learned the enthusiasm with which he had been received, the heart of Pinzon died within him. He called to mind his frequent arrogance and insubordination, and his wilful desertion off the coast of Cuba, by which he had impeded the prosecution of the voyage. Descending into his boat, therefore, he landed privately, and kept himself out of sight, until he heard of the admiral's departure. He then returned to his home, broken in health, and deeply dejected: he found himself fallen in public opinion; fancied the finger of scorn continually pointed at him; and in a few days he sunk into the grave, the victim of humiliation and remorse.\*

“His story,” observes one of the biographers of Columbus,

\* The family of the Pinzons removed, a long time ago, to a town called Huelva, where there are now four or five branches of them. They are not wealthy. They preserve some documents in the hand-writing of Martin Alonzo Pinzon, and follow his profession.



“ shows how one lapse from duty may counterbalance the merit of a thousand services ; how one moment of weakness may mar the beauty of a whole life of virtue ; and how important it is for a man, under all circumstances, to be true, not merely to others, but to himself.”

Columbus lost no time in conveying to Ferdinand and Isabella—then at Barcelona—information of his success. Equally astonished and delighted, the sovereigns invited him, in terms the most respectful and flattering, to repair immediately to court, that, from his own mouth, they might receive a full narrative of his extraordinary achievement. It was about the middle of April, when he arrived at Barcelona. His entrance into the city resembled a Roman triumph. The natives of the countries which he had discovered, marched first : next, were carried the ornaments of gold, fashioned by the rude art of the natives, the grains of gold found in the mountains, and dust of the same metal, gathered in the rivers. After these, appeared the various commodities of the newly-discovered countries, together with their curious productions ; and the procession was closed by Columbus himself. Ferdinand and Isabella, received him clad in their royal robes, and seated on a magnificent throne. When he approached, they arose, and, raising him, as he kneeled to kiss their hands, commanded him to take his seat upon a chair prepared for him, and to give a circumstantial narrative of his voyage. Every mark of honour, that gratitude could dictate, or admiration suggest, was conferred upon Columbus. Letters patent were issued, confirming to him and to his heirs, all the privileges contained in the treaty concluded at Santa Fe : his family was ennobled ; the king and queen, and, after their example, the courtiers, treated him, on every occasion, with all the ceremonious respect paid to persons of the highest rank. But what pleased Columbus most, was an order, to equip, without delay, an armament, of so great force, as might enable him not only to take possession of the countries which he had already discovered, but to search for more opulent regions, which he still confidently expected to find.

Next to the honour conferred upon him by the king, may be mentioned the respect shown him by Pedro Gonzalez de Mendoza, the grand cardinal of Spain, and first subject of the realm. He invited Columbus to a banquet ; where he assigned him the most honourable place at table, and had him served with the ceremonials, which, in those punctilious times, were observed towards sovereigns. At this repast, is

said to have occurred the well known anecdote of the egg. A shallow courtier present, impatient of the honours paid to Columbus, and meanly jealous of him as a foreigner, asked him whether he thought that, in case *he* had not discovered the Indies, there were not other men in Spain, who would have been capable of the enterprise? To this, Columbus made no immediate reply; but, taking an egg, invited the company to make it stand on one end. Every one attempted it, but in vain; whereupon, Columbus struck it upon the table, so as to break the end, and left it standing on the broken part; illustrating, in this simple manner, that, when he had once shown the way to the new world, nothing was easier than to follow it.

The fame of the successful voyage of Columbus spread over Europe, and excited general attention. Various conjectures were entertained, concerning the newly-found countries, and the division of the earth to which they belonged. Columbus adhered to his original opinion, that they were a part of those vast regions in Asia, comprehended under the general term of India; an assertion corroborated by the observations made by him concerning their productions. Not only the Spaniards, but the other nations of Europe, seem to have adopted this erroneous notion. The countries which he discovered, were then considered a part of India; and the name of India is given to them, by Ferdinand and Isabella, in a ratification of their former agreement granted to Columbus, on his return. Even after the error which caused this opinion was detected, and the true position of the new world was ascertained, the name has remained: the appellation of West Indies is given, by all the people of Europe, to the islands, and the name of Indians to the aboriginal inhabitants of every portion of the western continent and islands.



## CHAPTER III.

## THE SECOND VOYAGE OF COLUMBUS.

HE DISCOVERS DESEADA, DOMINICA, MARIGALANTE, GAUDALOUPE, ANTIGUA, SANTA CRUZ, AND PORTO RICO—FOUNDSTHE CITY OF ISABELLA, AND THE FORT OF ST. THOMAS—DISCOVERS JAMAICA—AND IS JOINED BY HIS BROTHER BARTHOLOMEW AT HISPANIOLA.

AN extraordinary spirit of enterprise was now excited amongst the Spaniards. Volunteers of every rank solicited employment. Allured by the inviting prospects which opened to their ambition and avarice, they were not intimidated either by the length or the danger of the navigation; and, cautious as was the temperament of Ferdinand, he seems to have caught the same spirit with his subjects. Preparations for a second voyage were urged, with an activity unusual in Spain, and to an extent that would be deemed not inconsiderable in the present age. The fleet consisted of seventeen vessels, some of which were of large burthen. It had on board fifteen hundred persons; amongst whom, were many of noble families, who had served in honourable stations. The greater part of these, being destined to remain in the country, were provided with every thing required either for conquest or colonization; including all kinds of European domestic animals; such seeds and plants as were most likely to thrive in the climate of the West Indies; utensils and instruments of every sort; and artificers of that description which might be most useful in an infant settlement.

But Ferdinand and Isabella did not rest their title to the possession of the newly-discovered countries, on the operations of the fleet alone. The example of the Portuguese, as well as the superstition of the age, made it necessary to obtain, from the Roman pontiff, a grant of those territories which they wished to occupy. The pope, as the representative of Jesus Christ, was supposed to have a right of dominion over all the kingdoms of the earth; and, by an act of liberality, which cost him nothing, and which served to establish the jurisdiction and pretensions of the papal see, granted, in full right, to Ferdinand and Isabella, all the countries in-

habited by infidels, which they had already discovered, or should at any future time discover. As it was necessary to prevent this grant from interfering with that formerly made to the crown of Portugal, he appointed that a line, supposed to be drawn from pole to pole, one hundred leagues to the west of the Azores, should serve as an intervening limit; and, in the plenitude of his power, bestowed all to the east of this imaginary line upon the Portuguese, and all to the west upon the Spaniards. Zeal for propagating the Christian faith, was the consideration employed by Ferdinand, in soliciting this bull, and is mentioned by Alexander VI., as his chief motive for issuing it. Twelve zealous ecclesiastics, amongst whom was one of those subtle politicians of the cloister, Father Boyl, who was placed over them, as apostolical vicar of the new world, were appointed to accompany Columbus, and to devote themselves to the conversion of the natives: the Indians, also, whom Columbus had brought with him, were baptized with much ceremony; the king himself, and the chief persons of his court, standing as their sponsors at the font.

Great hopes were entertained, that, on their return to their native country, those Indians would facilitate the introduction of christianity amongst their countrymen. One of them, at the request of prince Juan, remained in his household, but died not long afterwards; his baptism giving occasion to a Spanish historian\* to remark, that, according to what ought to be our pious belief, he was the first of his nation that entered Heaven.

Nothing now retarded the departure of the fleet. Columbus sailed from Cadiz on the 25th of September, and, touching again at the island of Gomera, he steered farther towards the south, than on his former voyage. By holding this course, he enjoyed more steadily the benefit of the regular winds which blow within the tropics; and was carried towards a large cluster of islands, situated considerably towards the east of those which he had already discovered. On the 2d of November, the twenty-sixth day after his departure from Gomera, he descried land. It was one of the Caribbee or Leeward islands; to which, he gave the name of Deseada, (the *desired*,) on account of the impatience of his crew to discover some part of the new world. He visited successively other islands, which he named Dominica, Marigalante, Gáu-

\* Herrera.

daloupe, Santa Maria la Antigua, Santa Cruz, and San Juan de Puerto Rico, and several afterwards scattered in his way, as he advanced towards the north-west. Dominica was so called, because he discovered it on Sunday; Marigalante, from the name of his vessel; and Gaudaloupe, because he had promised the monks of our lady of Gaudaloupe, in Estremadura, to call some newly-discovered place after their convent.

All these islands, he found inhabited by that fierce race of people whom Guacanahari had painted in so frightful colours. His description, as regards their warlike character, appeared not to have been exaggerated. The Spaniards never attempted to land, without meeting such a reception, as indicated the martial daring and spirit of the natives. In their habitations, the Spaniards observed what they conceived to be "relics of those horrid feasts which they had made upon the bodies of their enemies taken in war." This supposition, however, appears to us erroneous. We do not believe that any of those islanders eat human flesh. A more intimate knowledge of the practices of the Indian nations, leads us to conclude, that the portions of the human body then seen by the Spaniards, were preserved, by those islanders, as trophies, to indicate the number of their captured enemies. We might say further, that little confidence should be placed in the historians of that age, when asserting the barbarism of savage nations. Their conversion to the species of christianity which then prevailed in Europe, whether by persuasion or by force, was the ruling passion of the clergy—as bigoted as they were ignorant, and as cruel as they were superstitious; we may therefore suppose that they listened eagerly to every account which depicted those nations in colours tending to excite horror and disgust, and filled up the narrative by the invention of such additional circumstances, as served to justify the sanguinary extension of what they designated as the church of God.

At Gaudaloupe, Columbus permitted several of the captains to land, with a number of men, to open a communication with the inhabitants. After hearing so formidable accounts respecting the natives of the island, he was extremely uneasy, in the evening, that a captain of one of the caravels, Diego Marque, was missing, together with eight men. He had landed, with his party, early in the morning of the 5th of November, without leave, and, straying into the woods, had not since been seen. On the following day,

the wanderers had not returned, and the solicitude of Columbus increased, fearing that they might have fallen into some ambush of the savages; for, several of them were so experienced mariners, that it was thought, in case of being lost, they could readily have found their way back, by the stars. Parties were sent in various directions, in quest of them, each with a trumpeter, to sound calls and signals. Guns were fired from the ships, and small-arms on shore, but without effect; and the parties returned in the evening, wearied by a fruitless search. The reports made by them were not calculated to allay the apprehensions for the safety of their companions. They had entered several houses, they said, in which human limbs were suspended from the beams, as if curing for provisions; they found the head of a young man recently killed, which was yet bleeding, and some parts of his body boiling with the flesh of geese and parrots, and others roasting before the fire.

Columbus was much embarrassed as to the course he should pursue. He was very desirous to arrive at Navidad, and ascertain the fate of the Spaniards whom he had left there; and was impatient of any delay. In this emergency, Alonzo de Ojeda, a daring young cavalier, already distinguished in Spain for his chivalric exploits, volunteered to penetrate with forty men into the interior of the island, and search all the forests for the wanderers, whom their countrymen imagined were then preparing by the natives as a dainty for one of their horrid feasts. But their search was made in vain. To the discharge of the arquebusses, the sound of the trumpets, and the shouts of the human voice, no voice nor sound was heard, in reply, but the wild echo of the cliffs and vales. Columbus now concluded that the stragglers were lost. Several days had elapsed since their disappearance, during which time, if alive, it seemed most probable that they would either have been found, or have made their way back to the ships. He was just on the point of sailing, when, to the universal joy of the fleet, a signal was made by them from the shore. Their haggard and exhausted looks bespoke what they had suffered. Having unaccountably diverged on their first entering the forests, they had unknowingly penetrated deeper and deeper into the island, until they had become completely bewildered; and, for several days, they had been perplexed in the mazes of a trackless forest, so dense as almost to exclude the light of day. They brought with them several women and boys; but they had not met any men; the



greater part of the warriors being fortunately absent on a cruise, in quest of prisoners and booty.

Columbus made no stay in any of those islands, but proceeded directly to Hispaniola. When he arrived off Navidad, the station at which he had left the thirty-eight men under the command of Arado, he was astonished that none of them appeared. Foreboding what had befallen them, he rowed instantly to land. All the natives from whom he might have received information, had fled. The fort built by him was entirely demolished, and the tattered garments, together with the broken arms and utensils scattered around, left no doubt respecting the unhappy fate of the garrison. While the Spaniards were shedding tears over those sad memorials of their fellow-citizens, a brother of the cazique Guacanahari arrived. From him, Columbus received a particular detail of what had happened after his departure from the island. The familiar intercourse of the Indians with the Spaniards, had tended gradually to diminish the superstitious veneration, with which their first appearance had inspired that simple people. As soon as the powerful restraint, imposed by the presence and authority of Columbus, was withdrawn, the garrison threw off all regard for Arada. Regardless of the prudent instructions given to them by Columbus, every man became independent, and gratified his desires, without control. The gold, the women, the provisions of the natives—all, became the prey of those licentious oppressors. They roamed, in small parties, over the island, extending their rapacity and insolence to every corner. The cazique of Ciboa surprised and cut off several of the Spaniards, and, assembling his subjects, set the fort on fire. Some of the Spaniards were slain in its defence; the rest perished, in attempting to escape by crossing an arm of the sea. Guacanahari, whom all their exactions had not alienated from the Spaniards, had taken arms in their behalf, and, while endeavouring to protect them, had received a wound, by which he was still confined.

At the invitation of Columbus, Guacanahari, though still suffering from his wound, accompanied him, one evening to the ships. On board of the admiral's vessel, were ten women, delivered from the captivity of the Caribs. These soon attracted the notice of the cazique. Amongst them, was one distinguished above her companions, by a certain loftiness of air and manner. She had been much noticed and admired by the Spaniards, who had given her the name of Catalina. The cazique spoke to her, repeatedly, with great

gentleness of tone and manner; pity, it is not improbable, being mingled with his admiration; for, though rescued from the hands of the Caribs, she and her companions were treated as captives on board the ship. In the evening, Guacanahari returned to land. The next morning, there was an appearance of mysterious movement and agitation amongst the natives along the shore: and in the evening, the brother of Guacanahari came on board, under the pretext of bartering gold. He was observed to converse privately with the Indian females, particularly with Catalina; and, after remaining some time on board, he returned to the shore. It seems, that the warm heart of the cazique had been touched by the duress of this Indian beauty, and captivated by her charms, and that, with a kind of native gallantry, he designed to free her from confinement. At midnight, when the crew were fast asleep, the intrepid Catalina awoke her fellow prisoners, and proposed a bold attempt to regain their freedom. The ship was anchored fully three miles from the shore, and the sea was rough; but these island women were accustomed to sport amongst the waves, and to consider water as scarcely less their natural element, than the land. Having descended from the side of the vessel with great caution and silence, they swam bravely for the shore. But, with all their precaution, they were overheard by the watch. The alarm was given, the boats were manned, and pursuit was made in the direction of a light blazing on the shore: yet, notwithstanding all the vigour of the oar, so rapid were the movements of these amphibious fugitives, that they reached the land in safety. Four were retaken on the beach, but Catalina, with the rest of her band of swimmers, escaped into the forest.

Columbus had at first indulged in the error, that the natives of Hayti were destitute of all notions of religion, and that, consequently, not being pre-occupied, it would be the easier to implant in their minds the doctrines of christianity. But no people were ever yet known who were devoid of a religion. It was soon discovered that these islanders had their creed, though of a vague and simple nature. Like the Greeks and the Romans, they believed in one Supreme Being, who inhabited the skies, and was immortal: like them, they held the existence of inferior deities, who performed the office of messengers and mediators, through whom they addressed their worship to the great ruler of mankind. Every family, and each individual had likewise a protecting genius, like the penates or household gods of the ancients. They had priests,

who pretended to hold communion with the Zemes, or inferior deities; who practised rigorous fasts and ablutions; pretended to have trances and visions; to prophesy as to coming events; to cure all kinds of diseases; and, like every other nation of the earth, they believed in the immortality of the soul.

Instead of wasting time in scrutinizing the conduct of the natives, in relation to the garrison of Navidad, Columbus took precautions for preventing any future injury. With this view, he chose a situation more healthy and convenient. He traced out the plan of a town, in a large plain, near a spacious bay, and compelled every Spaniard to aid in accomplishing a work, on which depended their common safety. By their united labour, the houses and ramparts were soon so far advanced, as to afford them shelter and security. This rising city, the first founded by Europeans, in the new world, he named Isabella, in honour of his patroness, the queen of Castile.

1494. But Columbus had not only to sustain all the hardships, and to encounter all the difficulties to which infant colonies are exposed, but also to contend against what was more insuperable,—the laziness, the impatience, and mutinous disposition of his followers. By the enervating influence of a hot climate, the national inactivity of the Spaniards seemed to increase. They had not patience to wait for the gradual returns of the soil, and the smallness of the quantity caused them to despise the gold. The spirit of disaffection spread, and a conspiracy was formed, which might have proved fatal to Columbus and the colony. Happily, he discovered the sedition, and, seizing the leaders, punished some of them, sent others, as prisoners, to Spain, whither he, at the same time, despatched twelve of the vessels which had served as transports, with an earnest request of a reinforcement of men, and a large supply of provisions.

Meanwhile, Columbus planned several expeditions into the interior of the country. He sent a detachment, under the command of Ojeda, to visit the district of Cibao, which was reported to yield the greatest quantity of gold, and followed him, in person, with the main body of his troops. In this expedition, he displayed all the pomp of military magnificence that he could exhibit, in order to strike the imagination of the natives. He marched with colours flying, with martial music, and with a small body of cavalry, which paraded sometimes in the front, and sometimes in the rear. As those



were the first horses seen in the new world, they were objects no less of terror, than of admiration, to the Indians, who, having no tame animals themselves, were unacquainted with the vast accession of power which man has acquired, by subjecting them to his dominion. They conceived them to be rational creatures. They supposed that the horse and the rider formed one animal, at whose speed they were astonished, and whose impetuosity and strength they considered irresistible.

But while Columbus endeavoured to inspire the natives with a dread of his power, he did not neglect the arts of confidence and love. In all his transactions with them, he adhered scrupulously to the principles of integrity and justice; and treated them, on every occasion, not only with humanity, but indulgence.

The district of Cibao corresponded with the description given of it by the natives. It was mountainous and uncultivated; but, in every river and brook, gold was gathered, either in dust or in grains, some of which were of considerable size. The Indians had never opened any mines, in search of gold. The small quantity of that precious metal possessed by them, was either picked up in the beds of the rivers, or washed from the mountains by heavy rains. But, from those indications, the Spaniards could no longer doubt that the country contained rich treasures within its bowels. In order to insure the command of this valuable province, Columbus erected a small fort; to which, he gave the name of St. Thomas, by way of ridicule upon some of his incredulous followers, who would not believe that the country produced gold, until they saw it with their own eyes, and touched it with their own hands.

Having quelled the seditious complaints of the restless and disaffected at Isabella, Columbus resolved to pursue his discoveries, that he might ascertain whether those new countries, with which he had opened a communication, were connected with any region of earth already known; or were to be considered as a separate portion of the globe, hitherto unvisited. He appointed his brother Don Diego, aided by a council of officers, to govern the island during his absence.

He weighed anchor on the 24th of April, with one ship and two small barks. When passing amongst a labyrinth of small islands which he named the Queen's Garden, he was assailed by a most violent storm. Fortunately, it was not of long continuance, otherwise, his situation would have been



extremely perilous, for he found the navigation rendered difficult by numerous keys\* and sand-banks. When amongst these islands, Columbus, one calm evening, beheld a number of the natives, in a canoe, occupied in fishing, and was struck with the singular means which they employed. They had a small fish, the flat head of which was furnished with numerous suckers, by which it attached itself so firmly to any object, as to be torn to pieces, rather than abandon its hold. Having tied a long line to the tail of this fish, the Indians permitted it to swim at large. It generally kept near the surface of the water, until it perceived its prey, when, darting down swiftly, it attached itself, by the suckers, to the throat of the fish, or to the under shell of a tortoise; nor did it relinquish its prey, until both were drawn up by the fishermen, and taken out of the water. In this way, the Spaniards witnessed the taking of a tortoise of immense size; and Fernando Columbus affirms that he himself saw a shark caught in this manner, on the coast of Veragua.

During a tedious and distressing voyage of five months, Columbus made no discovery of importance, except the island of Jamaica. Had he persevered in his examination a few days longer, he would have been carried round the western extremity of Cuba: his illusion, respecting the geographical position of that island would have been thus dispelled, and an entirely different course have been given to his subsequent discoveries: in his present conviction, he lived and died; believing, to his last hour, that Cuba was the extremity of the Asiatic continent. His provisions were at length nearly consumed; his crew exhausted with fatigue, as well as hunger, murmured and threatened, and were ready to proceed to the most desperate extremities. Beset with danger in so many various forms, he was constrained to keep continual watch. On no occasion, had his skill and experience as a navigator been so fully tried. This unremitted fatigue of body, and intense application of mind, brought on a feverish disorder, terminating in a lethargy, which deprived him of sense and memory, and had almost proved fatal to his life.

He was preserved, however, to perform further service to  
*Sept. 4.* mankind. On his return to Hispaniola, the joy felt by him in meeting his brother Bartholomew at Isabella, occasioned so lively a flow of spirits, as greatly con-

\* Keys, from *cayos*, rocks which frequently form small islands on the coasts of America,

tributed to his recovery. Thirteen years had now elapsed, since the two brothers had separated from each other; and, during that long period, there had been no intercourse between them. In his voyage to England, Bartholomew Columbus was captured by pirates; who, having robbed him of every thing that he possessed, detained him, for many years, in captivity. When, at length, he arrived at London, his indigence was so great, that he was constrained to employ himself, during a considerable time, in drawing and selling maps, in order to furnish means sufficient to purchase decent attire, in which to appear at court. He was there treated with merited respect. After concluding a successful negotiation with Henry VII., he set out for Spain, by the way of France. At Paris, he received an account of the extraordinary discovery made by his brother, in his first voyage, and was informed that he was then preparing to embark on a second expedition. Though he continued his journey with the utmost despatch, the admiral had sailed for Hispaniola before he reached Spain. Ferdinand and Isabella received him with the greatest respect; and, as they knew that his presence would be most gratifying and consolatory to his brother, they persuaded him to take the command of three ships, appointed to carry provisions to the colony at Isabella.

His arrival, at this time, was no less fortunate, than unexpected. Never had Columbus stood more in need of a friend, capable of aiding him by his counsel, and dividing with him the cares and burthen of governing a refractory people. The licentious and tyrannical conduct of the Spanish soldiers; the scarcity of provisions, caused by their consuming a quantity of food, so large, compared with the light repasts to which the natives had been accustomed, and had consequently proportioned their supplies by cultivation, added to the certainty now apparent to the Indians, that their visiters intended to make a permanent residence in their country:—inflamed by these various considerations, with a degree of rage of which their gentle natures seemed hardly susceptible, they waited only for a signal from their leaders, to assail the colony. Several stragglers had already been surprised and cut off, by some of the caziques. The dread of this impending danger, united the Spaniards, and re-established the authority of Columbus; as they saw no prospect of safety, but in committing themselves to his prudent guidance. Though he had hitherto, with the greatest solicitude, avoided employing force against the Indians, it was now necessary to have recourse to arms.

A handful of men was about to encounter a whole nation. Two thirds of the original adventurers were dead. They had fallen victims either to their licentiousness, or to diseases engendered by the warmth and humidity of the climate. The most formidable enemy of the Spaniards, was Caonabo, the cazique of Maguano, the same who had surprised and massacred the garrison of La Navidad. He had natural talents for war; a proud and daring spirit to urge him on; three valiant brothers to assist him; and a numerous tribe at his command. His territories lay in the central and mountainous parts of the island, rendered difficult of access by rugged rocks, entangled forests, and frequent rivers. To make war upon this wily and ferocious chieftain, in a country where, at every step, there would be danger of falling into some sudden ambush, would be a work of time, uncertainty, and peril. Meanwhile, the settlements would be exposed to his secret and daring enterprises; and the mines subjected to frequent interruption. From this perplexity, Columbus was relieved by a bold proposition on the part of Ojeda, who offered to take the Carib chieftain by stratagem, and deliver him alive into his hands. The project was wild, hazardous, and romantic, characteristic of the fearless and adventurous spirit of Ojeda. Having chosen ten bold and hardy companions, well armed, and mounted on the most active horses, Ojeda plunged into the forest, and made his way above sixty leagues, at the head of his followers, into the wild territories of Caonabo, where he found the cazique in one of his most populous towns. Ojeda approached Caonabo with great deference and respect, treating him as a sovereign prince. He informed him that he had come on a friendly embassy from the admiral, who had sent him an invaluable present. Caonabo had encountered Ojeda in battle; he had witnessed his fiery prowess, and had conceived of him a warrior's admiration. He received him with a degree of chivalrous courtesy, and the gallant young soldier soon became a great favourite with Caonabo.

Ojeda now used all his influence to prevail upon the cazique to repair to Isabella, for the purpose of making a treaty with Columbus, and becoming his ally and friend. It is said that he offered him as a lure, the bell of the chapel of that place, which was the wonder of the island. The cazique agreed to accompany him to Isabella; but, when the time came to depart, Ojeda beheld, with surprise, a powerful force of warriors assembled, and ready to march. He inquired the



design of taking such an army on a mere friendly visit ; to which, the cazique proudly replied, that it was not befitting a great prince like him, to go forth scantily attended. Ojeda felt little satisfied with this reply : he knew the subtle character of Caonabo ; he feared some sinister design, and that the chieftain meditated a surprise of the fortress of Isabella, or an attempt upon the person of the admiral. He knew also that it was the wish of Columbus, either to make peace with the cazique, or to get possession of his person without being compelled to open war. He had recourse to a stratagem, therefore, which, though recorded by all the cotemporary historians, has the air of fable and romance. While on their march, having halted near the bank of a river, Ojeda one day produced a set of manacles of polished steel, so highly burnished that they looked like silver. He assured Caonabo that these were royal ornaments which had come from heaven ; that they were worn by the monarchs of Castile, at solemn dances, and other high festivities, and were intended as presents to the cazique. He proposed that Caonabo should go to the river and bathe ; after which, he should be decorated with these ornaments, mounted upon the horse of Ojeda, and return in the state of a Spanish monarch, to astonish his subjects. The cazique, with that fondness for glittering ornaments which is common to savages, was dazzled with the sight ; and his proud military spirit, also, was flattered with the idea of bestriding one of those tremendous animals, so dreaded by his countrymen. He accompanied Ojeda and his party to the river, with only few attendants, dreading nothing from nine or ten strangers, when thus surrounded by his army. After the cazique had bathed in the river, he was assisted to mount behind Ojeda, and the shackles were then adjusted. This done, they pranced around amongst the savages ; Ojeda making several circuits, to gain space, followed by his little band of horsemen ; the Indians shrinking back with affright from the capering steeds. At length, he made a wide sweep into the forest, until shut from the sight of the army by the trees. His followers then closed around him, and, drawing their swords, threatened Caonabo with instant death, if he made the smallest noise. They bound him, with cords, to Ojeda, to prevent his falling, or effecting an escape ; then, putting spurs to their horses, they dashed across the river, and escaped through the woods, with their prize.

Ojeda entered Isabella in triumph, with his wild Indian warrior bound behind him, a captive. Columbus could not



refrain from expressing his great satisfaction, when this dangerous enemy was delivered into his hands. The haughty Carib disdained to conciliate him by submission, or to depreciate his vengeance for the blood which he had shed of white men. He boasted of his achievement in surprising and burning the fortress of La Navidad, and slaughtering its garrison, and declared that he had secretly reconnoitred Isabella, with the intention of wreaking upon it the same desolation.

The captivity of Caonabo was deeply felt by his subjects. One of his brothers, a warrior of great courage and address, led an army of more than 7,000 men, secretly, to the neighbourhood of St. Thomas, where Ojeda was again in command, with the design of capturing a number of Spaniards, in the hope of obtaining Caonabo in exchange. The attempt, however, was frustrated by the vigilance of Ojeda. Leaving a sufficient force as a garrison, with the remainder, consisting of a small body of infantry and horse, he sallied forth to meet the approaching enemy, and, rushing furiously upon them, they were seized with a sudden panic. They threw down their weapons, and fled: many were slain, more were taken prisoners, and amongst the latter was the brother of Caonabo, bravely fighting in a pious but desperate cause.

The captivity of their beloved caziques, served rather to increase than diminish the hostility of the Indians against the Spaniards. Caonabo had still active and powerful relatives remaining, to attempt his rescue or revenge his fall. Scarcely had Columbus recovered his health, when he received intelligence that the allied caziques were assembled, in great force, in the valley within two days march of Isabella, with an intention of making a general assault upon the settlement, and overwhelming it by numbers. Columbus resolved to enter the field at once, and to carry the war into the territory of the enemy, rather than suffer it to be brought to his own doors. He issued forth from Isabella on 1495. the 24th of March. His little army consisted only of two-hundred foot, twenty horse, and twenty large dogs; of the species called blood-hounds; and, strange as it may seem, to mention the last as composing part of a military force, they were not perhaps less formidable than the soldiers, when employed against naked Indians.

All the caziques of the island, then at liberty, Guacanahari excepted, were at length in arms to oppose Columbus, with

forces amounting, according to the Spanish historians, to one hundred thousand men. But, instead of attempting to draw the Spaniards into the fastnesses of the woods and mountains, they were so imprudent as to take their station in the most open plain in the country. Columbus did not allow them time to perceive their error, or to alter their position. He attacked them during the night, and obtained an easy and bloodless victory. Many of the Indians were slain; more were taken prisoners, and reduced to servitude; and, so thoroughly were the rest intimidated, that, from that moment, they abandoned themselves to despair, relinquishing all thoughts of contending with aggressors whom they deemed invincible.

Several months were employed by Columbus, in marching through the island, and subjecting it to the Spanish government, without meeting any opposition. He imposed a tribute upon all the inhabitants above the age of fourteen. Each person who lived in those districts which yielded gold, was obliged to pay, every quarter of a year, as much gold dust as would fill a hawk's bell; while, from those in other parts of the country, there were demanded twenty-five pounds of cotton. This was the first regular taxation of the Indians, and served as a precedent for still more intolerable exactions. Such an imposition was entirely at variance with the maxims hitherto inculcated by Columbus, with respect to the mode of treating them. But intrigues then existed at the court of Spain, excited chiefly by Margarita and Father Boyl, who had clandestinely returned to Europe, for the purpose of undermining his power and discrediting his operations, which caused him to depart from his own system of administration. Columbus saw that there was only one method of supporting his own credit, and silencing his adversaries. He must produce so large a quantity of gold, as would not only justify his representations in regard to the richness of the country, but encourage Ferdinand and Isabella to persevere in prosecuting his plans: the necessity of obtaining it may therefore be pleaded, as some extenuation of his deviating, on this occasion, from the mildness and humanity with which he almost universally treated this unhappy people.

To enforce the payment of these tributes, and to maintain the subjection of the island, Columbus put the fortress already built in a strong state of defence, and erected others.

"In this way," to use the beautiful and pathetic language

of an admired writer,\* “ was the yoke of servitude fixed upon the island, and its thralldom effectually secured. Deep despair now fell upon the natives, when they found a perpetual task inflicted upon them, enforced at stated and frequently recurring periods. Weak and indolent by nature, unused to labour of any kind, and brought up in the untasked idleness of their soft climate and their fruitful groves, death itself seemed preferable to a life of toil and anxiety. They saw no end to this harassing evil, which had so suddenly fallen upon them, no escape from its all-pervading influence, no prospect of return to that roving independence and ample leisure, so dear to the wild inhabitant of the forest. The pleasant life of the island was at an end; the dream in the shade by day, the slumber during the sultry noontide heat by the fountain or the stream, or under the spreading palm-tree; and the song, the dance, and the game, in the mellow evening, when summoned to their simple amusements by the rude Indian drum. They were now obliged to grope, day by day, with bending body and anxious eye, along the borders of their rivers, sifting the sands for the grains of gold which every day grew more scanty; or to labour in their fields, beneath the fervour of a tropical sun, to raise food for their task-masters, or to produce the vegetable tribute imposed upon them. They sunk to sleep, weary and exhausted, at night, with the certainty that the next day was to be only a repetition of the same toil and suffering; or, if they occasionally indulged in their national dances, the ballads to which they kept time were of a melancholy and plaintive strain.”

The Indians formed a scheme of starving those oppressors whom they durst not attempt to expel. With this view, they suspended all the operations of agriculture: they sowed no maize; they pulled up the roots of the manioc or cassada, which had been planted; and, retiring to the least accessible parts of the mountain, left their uncultivated plains to their enemies. This desperate resolution produced, in some degree, the anticipated effect. The Spaniards were reduced to extreme want; but they received so seasonable supplies of provisions from Europe, and found so many resources in their own ingenuity and industry, that they suffered no great loss of men.

The wretched Indians became the victims of their own ill-

\* Washington Irving.

concerted policy. In the course of a few months, after experiencing misery in all its various forms, more than one third of the inhabitants of the island perished, by famine and disease.

Meanwhile, the enemies of Columbus laboured, with unceasing assiduity, to tarnish his glory, and deprive him of his merited rewards. The accusations against him gained so much credit in a jealous court, that a commissioner was appointed to repair to Hispaniola, to investigate his conduct. By the recommendation of his enemies, Aguado, a groom of the bed-chamber, was the person to whom was committed this important trust. But, in this choice, they seem to have been more influenced by the obsequious attachment of the man to their interest, than by his capacity for the station. By listening with eagerness to every accusation against Columbus, he fermented the spirit of dissension in the island, instead of redressing the many wrongs, with the odium of which he wished to load the admiral's administration. As Columbus felt deeply how humiliating must be his situation, if he remained in the country while so partial an inspector observed his motions, he determined to return to Spain, that he might lay a full account of all his transactions before Ferdinand and Isabella. The administration of affairs, during 1496. his absence, he committed to Don Bartholomew, his brother, with the title of Adelantado, or lieutenant-governor; and, by a choice less fortunate, he appointed Francis Roldan chief-justice, with very extensive powers.

Columbus sailed from Isabella, on his return to Europe, with two caravels, on the 10th of March. In one of these vessels, was Aguado. There were thirty Indians, also, on board of the caravels, amongst whom were Caonabo, one of his brothers, and a nephew; Columbus having promised the cazique and his brother to restore them to their country, and reinstate them in their power, after he had taken them to visit the king and queen of Castile. But in the course of the voyage, the unfortunate Caonabo died. He maintained his haughty nature to the last; and his death is ascribed chiefly to the corroding melancholy of a proud but broken spirit.

The course now held by Columbus was different from that which he had taken in his former voyage. He steered almost due east from Hispaniola, in the parallel of twenty-two north latitude, as experience had not yet discovered the more certain and expeditious method of keeping to the north, in order



to fall in with the south-west winds, which blow, without variation, from the east between the tropics, and made so little way, that he was three months without seeing land.

On arriving at Cadiz, he found three vessels in the harbour, commanded by Pedro Alonzo Nigno, on the point of sailing with supplies for the colony.

He appeared at the Spanish court with the modest but determined confidence of a man, conscious, not only of integrity, but of having performed great services to Spain. Ashamed of their own facility, in lending too favourable an ear to frivolous or ill-founded accusations, Ferdinand and Isabella received him with so distinguished marks of respect, as covered his enemies with shame. Their censures and calumnies were no more heard, at that juncture. His royal patrons resolved to supply the colony in Hispaniola with every thing that could render it a permanent establishment, and to furnish Columbus with such a fleet as would enable him to search for those new countries, of the existence of which he seemed confident. The precise number of adventurers, who should be permitted to embark, was fixed, and the new settlers were to be accompanied by a suitable number of women.

Thus far, the regulations were prudent, and well adapted to the end in view. But, in order to hasten the progress of the infant colony, Columbus proposed that there should be transported to Hispaniola, such malefactors as had been convicted of crimes, which, although capital, were not, in the highest degree, atrocious; and that, in future, a certain proportion of the offenders, usually sent to the galleys, should be condemned to labour in the mines. This advice, given without due reflection, was as inconsiderately adopted. The prisons of Spain were emptied, in order to collect members for the intended colony; and the judges, impowered to try criminals, were instructed to recruit it by their future sentences; a deeply pernicious policy, which caused the most unhappy effects.

1498. The hostility of the great navigator's enemies, was too inveterate to remain long inactive. So many obstacles were thrown in the way, to retard the operations for his expedition, that more than a year elapsed, before he could procure two ships to carry a part of the supplies destined for the colony, and almost two years were spent, before the small squadron was equipped, of which he himself was to assume the command.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE THIRD VOYAGE OF COLUMBUS.

HE DISCOVERS THE ISLAND OF TRINIDAD, THE CONTINENT OF AMERICA, THE MOUTH OF THE ORONOCO, AND THE ISLANDS OF MARGARITA AND CUBAGUA.—ST. DOMINGO FOUNDED BY BARTHOLOMEW COLUMBUS.—THE NEW WORLD NAMED AFTER AMERICO VESPUCCIO.—BRAZIL DISCOVERED BY PEDRO ALVAREZ CABRAL.—COLUMBUS AND HIS TWO BROTHERS ARE BROUGHT HOME IN CHAINS.

1498. THE third voyage of Columbus was commenced on the 30th of May. He sailed from the port of St. Lucar de Barrameda; his squadron consisting of only six vessels, of small burthen, and not fully provided for a long and dangerous navigation. The voyage now meditated by this adventurous seaman, was in a course different from any that he had before undertaken. As he was fully persuaded, that the fertile regions of India lay to the south of those countries which he had already discovered, he proposed, as the most certain method of finding out the former, to steer directly south from the Canary or Cape de Verd islands, until he came under the equinoctial line, and then to stretch to the west, before the wind favourable for such a course, which blows invariably between the tropics. He touched first at the Canary, and then at the Cape de Verd islands. From the former, he despatched three of his ships, with a supply of provisions for the colony; with the other three, he continued his voyage towards the south. No remarkable occurrence happened, until the 19th of July, when they were within five degrees of the equator. There, they were becalmed, and, at the same time, the heat became so excessive, that the tar melted, the seams of the ships opened, many of their wine-casks burst, the liquor in others soured, and their salted provisions became putrid. The Spaniards, who had never before ventured so far to the south, feared that the ships would take fire, and began to apprehend the reality of what the ancients had affirmed, respecting the destructive atmosphere of the torrid zone. They were relieved, in some

measure, from their fears, by a fall of rain. This, however, though so heavy and unremitting, that the men could hardly remain on deck, did not greatly mitigate the intenseness of the heat: Columbus, therefore, exhausted by fatigue and want of sleep, was constrained to yield to the importunities of his crew, and to alter his course to the north-west, in order to search some of the Caribbee islands, where he might be supplied with provisions, and refit.

On the 1st of August, the man stationed on the round-top surprised them with the joyous cry of *land*. The summits of three mountains were seen above the horizon. As the ships approached nearer, it was observed that these mountains were joined together at their base. Columbus had determined to consecrate the first land that he should behold, by giving it the name of the Trinity. The appearance of these three mountains, united into one, struck him as a singular and almost miraculous coincidence; with a solemn feeling of devotion, therefore, in conformity with the superstitious impressions which guided him in all his actions, he gave this newly-discovered island the name of La Trinidad, which it continues to bear to the present day. It lies off the coast of Guiana, near the mouth of the Orinoco. This, although a river of only the third or fourth class, in the new world, far surpasses any of the streams in the eastern hemisphere. It rolls towards the ocean so vast a body of water, and rushes into it with so impetuous a force, that, when it meets the tide, which on that coast rises to an uncommon height, their collision occasions a swell and agitation of the waves, not less surprising than formidable. With the utmost difficulty, Columbus escaped through a narrow strait, which appeared so tremendous, that he called it La Boca del Drago, or the Dragon's Mouth.

As soon as the consternation excited by this phenomenon permitted him to reflect upon the nature of an appearance so extraordinary, he discerned in it a source of comfort and hope. He justly concluded, that so vast a body of water could not be supplied by any island, but must flow through a country of immense extent; and consequently that he had now, without the smallest doubt, reached that continent which it had long been the object of his wishes to discover. He steered to the west, along the coast of those provinces known by the names of Paria and Cumana. He landed in several places, and had some intercourse with the people, who resem-

bled those of Hispaniola in their appearance and manner of life. They wore, as ornaments, small plates of gold, and pearls of considerable value, which they willingly exchanged for European toys. They seemed to possess more intelligence, and greater courage, than the inhabitants of the islands. The country produced four-footed animals of several kinds, as well as a great variety of fowls and fruits. Columbus was so much delighted with its beauty and fertility, that, with the warm enthusiasm of a discoverer, he imagined it to be the Paradise described in Scripture. Here, he supposed to be situated the original abode of our first parents, the Garden of Eden, the primitive seat of human innocence and bliss. He imagined this place to be still flourishing in all its ineffable delights, but inaccessible to mortal feet, except by divine permission, according to the opinion of the most eminent fathers of the church. From the elevated region of the earth, which he conceived to lie near the equator, he presumed flowed the mighty stream of fresh water which filled the gulf of Paria; being supplied by the fountain mentioned in Genesis, as springing from the tree of life.

Thus, Columbus was the first man that conducted the Spaniards\* to that vast continent, which, for more than two centuries, was the chief seat of their empire, and the source of their treasures in that quarter of the globe.

Circumstances did not permit him, at this time, to extend his examination of that country as far as he desired. The shattered condition of his ships, the scarcity of provisions, his own infirmities, together with the impatience of his crew, prevented him from pursuing his discoveries any farther, and made it necessary to bear away for Hispaniola; with the intention of resuming the object of his voyage at a future day. In his way thither, he discovered several small islands; amongst which, were Margarita and Cubagua, afterwards famous for their pearl fisheries.

When he arrived at Hispaniola, in the latter end of August, he was wasted in an extreme degree, by fatigue and sickness, and was almost blind; yet he found the affairs of the colony in such a state of confusion, as afforded him no prospect of repose. Many revolutions had happened, during his

\* Profiting by the discoveries of Columbus, Sebastian Cabot, a native of Bristol, commissioned by Henry VII. of England, had reached the coast of Labrador, in North America, in June 1497.



absence. In consequence of advice given by Columbus, before his departure, his brother had removed the colony from Isabella, to a more commodious station, on the opposite side of the island, and laid the foundation of St. Domingo. In the mean time, the natives made another endeavour to regain their liberty; and a revolt, of an aspect far more alarming, was excited by Francis Roldan, whom Columbus had appointed chief-justice of the island. The mutineers endeavoured to surprise the fort at St. Domingo; but they were defeated by the vigilance and courage of Don Diego Columbus, and compelled to return to the province of Xaragua; where they continued not only to disclaim the adalantado's authority themselves, but excited the Indians to throw off the yoke.

Such was the distracted state of the colony, when Columbus landed at St. Domingo. He was astonished to find that the three ships despatched by him from the Canaries, had not yet arrived. By the unskilfulness of the pilots, and the violence of the currents, they had been carried a hundred-and-sixty miles to the west of St. Domingo, and forced to take shelter in a harbour of the province of Xaragua, where Roldan and his seditious followers were cantoned. Roldan concealed from the commanders of the ships his insurrection against the adalantado; and, employing his utmost address to gain their confidence, persuaded them to set on shore a considerable part of the new settlers, under a pretext that they might proceed by land to St. Domingo. It required few arguments with these men to induce them to espouse his cause. They were criminals released from the jails of Spain, and they returned eagerly to a course of life nearly resembling that to which they had been accustomed.

By this junction with a band of bold and desperate associates, Roldan became extremely formidable, and no less extravagant in his demands. But, though filled with resentment at his ingratitude, and highly exasperated by the insolence of his followers, Columbus made no haste to take the field. Trembling at the thoughts of kindling a civil war, in which, whatever party prevailed, the strength and power of both must be so much wasted, as might encourage the common enemy to unite and complete their destruction, he chose rather to negotiate than to fight. This mode of pacification proved successful. Gradually, and without bloodshed, he dissolved this dangerous combination, which had

threatened the colony with ruin ; and restored the appearance of regular government and order.

1499. In consequence of this agreement with the mutineers, lands were allotted them in different parts of the island ; and the Indians settled in each district were appointed to cultivate a certain portion of ground, for the use of these new masters. The performance of this work, was substituted in place of the tribute formerly imposed ; and introduced amongst the Spaniards, the *repartimientos*, or distribution of Indians, established by them in all their settlements ; which brought innumerable calamities upon that unhappy people, subjected them to the most grievous oppression, and greatly contributed to exterminate them from the island of Hispaniola.

At this stage of our narrative, it is proper to take a view of some events, which merit attention, both on account of their own importance, and their connexion with the history of the new world.

In the summary account, which, previous to our entering upon the voyages of Columbus, we gave of the gradual progress of discovery in the eastern hemisphere, we last alluded to the advance of Diaz within view of the great southern cape of Africa. Rather stimulated than depressed by the amazing issue of the patronage which they had denied Columbus, the Portuguese attentively pursued their favourite object. Their endeavours were crowned with success. On the 20th of November, in the year 1497, Vasco de Gama, employed by the king of Portugal, passed that celebrated promontory, and, on the 22nd of May, 1498, arrived at Calicut, on the coast of Malabar.

Vast objects were now presented for speculation. Roused and interested by the inviting prospect, the human mind engaged with ardour in their pursuit, and exerted its active powers in every direction. All the attempts towards discovery, made by the Spaniards, had hitherto been conducted by Columbus alone, at the expense chiefly of the crown. But private adventurers now offered to fit out squadrons at their own risk, and go in quest of new countries ; and the Spanish court, whose scanty revenues were exhausted by its expeditions to the new world, was not unwilling to transfer the burthen of discovery to its subjects. One of the first propositions of this kind, was made by Ojeda. His rank and character procured him so much credit with the merchants of

Seville, that they undertook to equip four ships, provided he could obtain the royal licence. A suit so agreeable to the court was not rejected. Without consulting Columbus, or regarding the rights and jurisdiction vested in him by the contract of 1492, Ojeda was permitted to set out for *May*. the new world. In order to direct his course, he was furnished, by one of the courtiers, with the admiral's journal of his last voyage, and his charts of the countries which he had discovered. The principal pilot of the expedition, was Juan de la Cosa; a mariner of great repute, who had been instructed by the admiral, had accompanied him in his first voyage of discovery, and in that along the southern coast of Cuba; and around the island of Jamaica. There were several also of the mariners, and Bartholomew Roldan, a distinguished pilot, who had been with Columbus in his voyage to Paria. Ojeda entered upon no new path of navigation; but, adhering to the route previously taken by Columbus, arrived on the Parian coast. He traded with the natives, and steering to the west, proceeded as far as Cape de Vela, and ranged along a considerable extent of coast, beyond that visited by Columbus. Having thus confirmed the opinion of Columbus, that this country was a part of the continent, Ojeda returned, by way of Hispaniola, to Spain, with some reputation as a discoverer, but with little benefit to those who had provided the funds for the expedition.

In this voyage, Ojeda was accompanied by a gentleman of Florence, Americo Vesputio. In what station, he served, is uncertain; but as he was an experienced sailor, and eminently skilful in all the sciences subservient to navigation, his companions seem to have willingly allowed him a chief share in directing the voyage. Soon after his return, he transmitted an account of his adventures and discoveries to one of his countrymen; and he had the address to frame his narrative, so as to make it appear that to him was due the glory of having first discovered the continent in the new world. Americo's account was drawn up not only with art, but with some elegance. The country of which he was supposed to be the discoverer, came gradually to be called by his name: the caprice of mankind has perpetuated this error; and by the universal consent of all nations, AMERICA is the name given to this new quarter of the globe.

During the same year, another voyage of discovery was undertaken. Pedro Alonzo Nigno, who had served under the

admiral in his last expedition, fitted out a caravel of fifty tons, in conjunction with Christopher Guerra, a wealthy merchant of Seville. Having arrived on the coast of Terra Firma, south of Paria, they ran along it for some distance, passed through the gulf, and thence west, one-hundred-and-thirty leagues, along the coast of the present republic of Colombia; visiting what was afterwards called the pearl-coast. They landed in several places, disposed of their European trifles at immense profit, and returned with a large quantity of gold and pearls; having made, in their diminutive vessel, one of the most extensive and lucrative voyages that had yet been accomplished. Soon afterwards, Vincent Pinzon, one of the admiral's companions in his first voyage, sailed from Palos, with four caravels; and, standing boldly towards the south, was the first Spaniard that crossed the equinoctial line; but he seems not to have landed on any part of the coast beyond the mouth of the Maragnon, or river of the Amazons.

All those navigators adopted the erroneous theory of Columbus, and believed that the countries which they had discovered were part of the vast continent of India.

In the last year of the fifteenth century, that fertile district of America, on the confines of which Pinzon had arrested his progress, was more fully discovered. The successful voyage of Gama to the East Indies, having encouraged the king of Portugal to fit out a fleet so powerful as not only to prosecute trade with the magnificent countries of which he had brought accounts, but to attempt their conquest, he gave the command of it to Pedro Alvarez Cabral. He sailed on the 15th of March. In order to avoid the coast of Africa, where he was certain of meeting with variable breezes, or frequent calms which would retard his voyage, Cabral stood out to sea, and kept so far to the west, that, to his surprise, on the 25th of April, he found himself on the shore of an unknown country, in the tenth degree beyond the line. He imagined, at first, that it was some island in the Atlantic Ocean, hitherto unobserved; but, proceeding along its coast, rather beyond the 15th degree of southern latitude, he was led to believe, that a country so extensive formed a part of some great continent. This latter opinion was well founded. The country with which he had fallen in, belongs to that province in South America, now known by the name of Brazil. He landed; and, having formed a very favourable idea of the fertility of the soil, and agreeables of the climate,



he took possession of it for the crown of Portugal, and despatched a ship to Lisbon, with an account of this event, which appeared no less important than unexpected.

In this way, did the Brazils come into the possession of Portugal; being to the eastward of the connectional line, settled with Spain as the boundary of their respective territories.

While the Spaniards and Portuguese, by those successive voyages, were daily acquiring more enlarged ideas of the extent and opulence of that quarter of the globe which Columbus had made known to them, he himself was struggling with every distress in which the envy and malevolence of the people under his command, or the ingratitude of the court, could involve him. A great number of those persons who were most dissatisfied with his administration, had returned to Europe, in the ships which he had despatched from St. Domingo. The final disappointment of all their hopes, inflamed the rage of these unfortunate adventurers against Columbus, to the highest pitch. Their poverty and distress, by exciting compassion, rendered their accusations credible, and their complaints interesting. They incessantly teased Ferdinand and Isabella with memorials, containing a detail of their own grievances, and the articles of their charge against Columbus; and demanded vengeance upon the author of their sufferings. They even found their way to the court at Granada. They followed the king when he rode out, filling the air with their complaints, and clamouring for their pay. At one time, about fifty of those vagrants penetrated into the inner court of the Alhambra, under the royal apartments, holding up bunches of grapes, as the meagre diet left them by their poverty, and railing aloud at the deceits of Columbus, and the cruel neglect of government. The two sons of Columbus, at that time pages to the queen, happening to pass by, they followed them with imprecations, exclaiming, "There go the sons of the admiral, the whelps of him who discovered the land of vanity and delusion, the grave of Spanish hidalgos!"\*

Those avowed endeavours of the malcontents from America, to ruin Columbus, were seconded by the secret, but more dangerous insinuations of that party amongst the courtiers, which had always thwarted his schemes, and envied his success and credit.

\* Hidalgo, in Spanish, signifies a person of the rank of gentleman.

Ferdinand was disposed to listen to these accusations, not only with a willing, but with a partial ear. Notwithstanding the flattering accounts given by Columbus of the riches of America, the remittances from it had hitherto been so trifling, that they were much less in amount than the expenses incurred by the adventurers. The glory of the discovery, together with the prospect of remote commercial advantages, was all that Spain had yet received, in return for her continued efforts. Ferdinand therefore considered Spain as having lost by the enterprise of Columbus; and imputed to his misconduct and incapacity for government, that a country abounding in gold had yielded nothing valuable to its conquerors. Even Isabella, who had uniformly protected him, was at length shaken by the number and boldness of his accusers, and began to suspect that a disaffection so general, must have been occasioned by real grievances, which called for redress.

But there were circumstances connected with the administration of Columbus, by which the queen was particularly affected. Having taken a maternal interest in the welfare of the natives, she had been repeatedly offended by what appeared, to her, pertinacity on the part of the admiral, in continuing to make slaves of the Indians taken in warfare, in contradiction of her known wishes. The same ships which brought home the companions of Roldan, brought likewise a great number of slaves. Some, Columbus had been obliged to grant to these men by the articles of capitulation; others, they had carried away clandestinely. Amongst them, were several daughters of caziques, who had been seduced away from their families by these profligates. Some of these were likely soon to become mothers; others had new-born infants. This was represented, in all its force, to Isabella, and described as the gratuitous act of Columbus. Her sensibility as a woman was excited; her dignity as a queen invaded. She ordered all the Indians to be restored to their country and friends: she commanded that those formerly sent to Spain by the admiral, should be sought for, and sent back to Hispaniola. Unfortunately for Columbus, at this very juncture, in one of his letters he had advised the continuance of Indian slavery, for some time longer, as a measure important for the welfare of the colony. This contributed to heighten the indignation of Isabella, and induced her no longer to oppose the sending out of a commission to supersede him in command. A resolution was therefore taken, fatal to Colum-

bus. Francisco de Bovadilla, a commander of the military and religious order of Calatrava, was appointed to repair to Hispaniola, with full powers to enquire into the conduct of the admiral; and, if he should find the charge of mal-administration proved, to supersede him in the government. Never was there issued a more irrational or unjust commission. It was impossible to escape condemnation, when it was the interest of the judge to convict the person whom he was sent to try. Though Columbus had now composed all the dissensions in the island, and placed every thing in such a state, as promised considerable gain to individuals, and a large revenue to the king, yet Bovadilla evinced, from the moment when he landed in Hispaniola, a determined purpose of treating him as a criminal. He took possession of the admiral's house in St. Domingo, and seized his property and writings, as if his guilt had been fully proved; he rendered himself master of the fort and of the public stores by violence; he required all persons to acknowledge him as supreme governor, and summoned him to appear before his tribunal, to answer for his conduct.

Columbus submitted to the will of his sovereigns with respectful silence, and repaired instantly to the court of their violent and partial judge. Without admitting him into his presence, Bovadilla ordered him, together with his two brothers, immediately to be arrested, to be put in irons, and imprisoned in the fortress. When the irons were brought, every one present shrunk from the task of putting them upon Columbus, either from a sentiment of compassion at so great a reverse of fortune, or an habitual reverence for his person. To fill the measure of ingratitude meted out to him, it was one of his own domestics, "a graceless and shameless cook," says a cotemporary historian,\* "who, with unwashed front, applied to him the manacles, as though he were serving him with choice and savoury viands."

St. Domingo now swarmed with miscreants, just delivered from the dungeon and the gibbet. Every base villain who had been awed into obsequiousness by Columbus and his brothers, when in power, now started up to revenge himself upon them, when in chains. The most injurious slanders were loudly proclaimed in the streets; insulting pasquinades, and inflammatory libels were placarded at the corners; and horns

\* Las Casas.



were blown in the neighbourhood of their prisons, to taunt them with the exultings of the rabble.

All accusations, the most improbable, as well as inconsistent, were received against Columbus. No informer, however infamous, was rejected. The result of this indecent inquest, Bovadilla transmitted to Spain. At the same time, he ordered Columbus, with his two brothers, to be carried thither, in chains; and, adding cruelty to insult, he confined them in different ships.

Fortunately, the voyage to Spain was short. As soon as Ferdinand and Isabella were informed that Columbus was brought home a prisoner, and in chains, they perceived what universal astonishment this event must occasion, and what an impression it must make to their disadvantage. Ashamed of their own conduct, and eager not only to make some reparation for this injury, but efface the stain which it must fix

*Dec. 17.* upon their character, they instantly issued orders to set Columbus at liberty, invited him to court, and remitted money to enable him to appear there in a manner suitable to his rank. When he entered the royal presence, Columbus threw himself at his sovereigns' feet, and remained for some time silent. At length, he recovered from his agitation, and vindicated his conduct in a long discourse; producing the most satisfactory proofs of his own integrity, as well as good intention, and evidence, no less clear, of the malevolence of his enemies; who, not satisfied with having ruined his fortune, laboured to deprive him of what alone was now left—his honour and his fame. Ferdinand received him with decent civility; Isabella, with tenderness and respect. They both expressed their sorrow for what had happened, disavowed their participation in it, and joined in promising him protection and future favour. But, though they instantly degraded Bovadilla, in order to remove from themselves any suspicion of having authorised his violent proceedings, they did not restore Columbus to his jurisdiction, as viceroy of those provinces which he had discovered. They were afraid to trust a man to whom they had been so highly indebted; and, under various pretexts, retaining him at court, they appointed Don Nicholas de Ovando governor of Hispaniola.

Columbus was deeply affected by this new injury, inflicted by hands which seemed employed in making reparation for the past. Wherever he went, he carried with him, as a me-



morial of Spanish ingratitude, the fetters with which he had been loaded: they were constantly suspended in his chamber, and he gave orders that when he died, they should be buried in his grave.

1501. In the mean time, the spirit of research continued active and vigorous. Roderigo de Bastidas, in co-partnership with Juan de la Cosa, who had served in two voyages under Columbus; and not long afterwards, Ojeda, with his former associate, Amerigo Vespuccio, sailed along all the coast of the province now known by the name of Terra Firma, from Cape de Vela to the Gulf of Darien.

Before these adventurers returned from their voyages, a fleet was equipped, at the public expense, for conveying Ovando, the new governor, to Hispaniola. His presence there was extremely requisite, in order to stop the inconsiderate career of Bovadilla, whose imprudent administration threatened the settlement with ruin. Instead of protecting the Indians, Bovadilla gave a legal sanction to their oppression. He took an exact number of those who survived their past calamities, divided them into distinct classes, distributed them, as property, amongst his adherents, and reduced them all to a state of complete servitude. He granted universal permission to work the mines, paying only an eleventh, instead of a third part, to the government. To prevent any diminution in the revenue, it became necessary to increase the quantity of gold collected. He compelled the caziques, therefore, to furnish each Spaniard with Indians, to assist him both in the labours of the field and of the mine. The only injunction of Bovadilla was, "to produce large quantities of ore." He had one saying continually in his mouth: "make the most of your time," he would say; "there is no telling how long it may last;" alluding to the possibility of his being speedily recalled. The colonists strictly followed his advice; and so hard did they drive the poor natives, that the eleventh yielded more revenue to the crown, than had ever been produced by the third under the government of Columbus.

In the mean time, the unhappy natives suffered every species of cruelty from their inhuman taskmasters. Little used to labour, of feeble constitution, and accustomed, in their delightful and luxuriant country, to a life of ease and freedom, they sunk under the toils imposed upon them, and the severities by which they were enforced.

An indignant picture is given, by one of the historians of

that period, of the capricious tyranny exercised over the Indians by worthless Spaniards, particularly by those who had been taken from the dungeons of Castile. "These wretches," to use the language of an admired biographer, "who, in their own country, had been the vilest amongst the vile, here assumed the tone of grand cavaliers. They insisted on being attended by trains of servants. They took the daughters of female relatives of caziques, for their domestics, or rather for their concubines, nor did they limit themselves in number. When they travelled, instead of using the horses and mules with which they were provided, they obliged the natives to transport them on their shoulders, in litters or hammacs, with others attending, to hold umbrellas of palm-leaves over their heads, to keep off the sun, and fans made of feathers, to cool them; and Las Casas affirms that he has seen the backs and shoulders of the unfortunate Indians who bore the litters, raw and bleeding from the task."

1502. The necessity of applying a speedy remedy to these disorders, hastened the departure of Ovando. He had the command of the most respectable armament hitherto fitted out for the new world. It consisted of thirty-two ships, on board of which there embarked two-thousand-five-hundred persons, with an intention of settling in the country. On *April 15.* the arrival of the new governor, Boyadilla resigned his charge, and was commanded to return instantly to Spain, to answer for his conduct. Roldan, and the other ringleaders of the mutineers, who had been the most active in opposing Columbus, were required to leave the island at the same time; while a proclamation was issued, declaring the natives to be free subjects of Spain, of whom no service was to be exacted, contrary to their own inclination, and without paying them an adequate price for their labour. But a concurrent decree, published by Ferdinand and Isabella, furnishes matter for serious reflection. While making regulations to mitigate the condition of the Indians, with that inconsistency which frequently mars the purposes of human judgment, they encouraged a gross invasion of the rights of another race of our fellow creatures. Amongst their various decrees on this occasion, are found the first seeds of negro slavery in the western hemisphere. It was permitted to carry to the colonies, negro slaves, born amongst christians, by which are meant, slaves born in Seville and other parts of Spain, the children and descendants of natives brought from

the Atlantic coasts of Africa; with which regions, a traffic of the kind had for some time been prosecuted by the Spaniards and Portuguese.—“There are signal events in the course of history,” observes an elegant and highly esteemed American writer,\* “which sometimes bear the appearance of temporal judgments. It is a fact, worthy of observation, that Hispaniola, the place where this flagrant sin against nature and humanity was first introduced into the new world, has been the first to exhibit an awful retribution.”

Even the modification designed to ameliorate the severe condition of the Indians, was used only as a mockery of freedom. It was arranged, that the several caziques were to furnish the settlers with a certain number of Indians, who were to be paid by their employer, and instructed in the catholic faith. But the pay was so small, as to be little more than nominal; the instruction little more than the mere ceremony of baptism; and the term of labour was at first six, and then eight months in every year. Under cover of this hired labour, intended both for the ease of their bodies and the salvation of their souls, more intolerable toil was imposed upon them, and more horrible cruelties were inflicted, than in the worst days of Bovadilla. They were separated, often the distance of several days' journey, from their wives and children; doomed to intolerable labour of all kinds, extorted by the cruel infliction of the lash. For food, they had cassava-bread, an unsubstantial support for men compelled to labour; sometimes, a very small quantity of pork was distributed amongst a great number; scarcely a mouthful to each. When the Spaniards who superintended the mines, were at their repast, says a humane writer,† the famished Indians scrambled under the table, like dogs, for any bone that might be thrown to them; and, after they had gnawed and sucked it, they pounded it between stones, and mixed it with their cassava-bread, that nothing of so precious a morsel might be lost.

\* Irving.

† Las Casas.



## CHAPTER V.

## THE FOURTH AND LAST VOYAGE OF COLUMBUS.

HE MAKES FURTHER DISCOVERIES ALONG THE CONTINENT OF AMERICA, AND NAMES THE HARBOUR OF PORTO BELLO—IS WRECKED ON THE COAST OF JAMAICA—RETURNS TO EUROPE.—DEATH OF ISABELLA.—DEATH OF COLUMBUS—IS SUCCEEDED BY HIS SON DIEGO.

MEANWHILE, Columbus was engaged in the unpleasant employment of soliciting the favour of an ungrateful court; and, notwithstanding all his merit and services, he solicited in vain. He demanded, in terms of the original contract of 1492, to be reinstated in his office of viceroy over the countries which he had discovered. But, by a strange fatality, the circumstance urged by him in favour of his claim, determined a jealous monarch to reject it. The greatness of his discoveries, and the prospect of their increasing value, made Ferdinand consider the concessions in that agreement as extravagant and impolitic. He was afraid to intrust a subject with the exercise of a jurisdiction, which might become no less formidable than it now appeared extensive. He inspired Isabella with the same suspicions; and, under various pretexts, equally frivolous and unjust, they eluded all the requisitions of Columbus to perform what a solemn compact bound them to accomplish. After attending the court of Spain for nearly two years, as an humble suitor, he perceived that he laboured in vain, when he urged a claim of justice or merit with an interested and unfeeling prince.

The spirit of Columbus, however, was not yet subdued. Even that ungenerous return did not discourage him from pursuing the great object which had first called forth his inventive genius. To open a new passage to the East Indies, was his original and favourite scheme. This still engrossed his thoughts; and, either from his own observations in his voyage to Paria, or from some obscure hints of the natives, or from the accounts given by Bastidas and De la Cosa, of their expedition, he conceived an opinion, that, beyond the continent of America, there was a sea which extended to the



East Indies, and hoped to find some strait or narrow neck of land, by which a communication might be opened with it and that part of the ocean already known. By a fortunate conjecture, he supposed this strait or isthmus to be situated near the gulf of Darien. Full of this idea, though now at an advanced age, and broken with infirmities, he offered to undertake a voyage which would ascertain this important point, and perfect the grand scheme, which, from the beginning, he proposed to accomplish.

Several circumstances concurred, in disposing Ferdinand and Isabella to lend a favourable ear to this proposal. They were glad to have the pretext of any honourable employment, for removing from court a person with whose demands they deemed it impolitic to comply, and whose services it was indecent to neglect: about this time, too, the Portuguese fleet, under Cabral, arrived from the Indies; by the richness of its cargo, giving the people of Europe a more perfect idea than they had hitherto been able to form, of the opulence and fertility of the east: thus, Lisbon became immediately the seat of commerce and wealth; while Spain had only the expectation of remote benefit, and future gain, from the western world. For the performance of this important object, there were assigned to Columbus, four small barks, the largest of which did not exceed seventy tons; the crews amounting, in all, to one-hundred-and-fifty men. It appears, however, that he preferred vessels of this size, to larger, for a voyage of that nature, on account of the greater safety arising from their easy draught of water, when exploring an unknown coast. He was accompanied by his brother Bartholomew, and his second son Ferdinand, the historian of his actions. He sailed from Cadiz on the 9th of May, and touched, as usual, at the Canary islands; whence, he proposed to steer directly for Jamaica, and thence for the continent, in search of the supposed straits: but his largest vessel was so clumsy and unfit for service, that he was constrained to shape his course for Hispaniola, (contrary to the orders of the sovereigns, prohibiting him, on his outward voyage, to touch at this island,) in the hope of exchanging her for some ship of the fleet that had carried out Ovando.

*June 24.* When he arrived at St. Domingo, he found eighteen of those ships ready laden, and on the point of departing for Spain. Columbus immediately acquainted the governor with the destination of his voyage, and the ac-

cident which had obliged him to alter his route. He requested permission to enter the harbour, not only that he might negotiate the exchange of his ship, but that he might take shelter during a violent hurricane, of which, from various prognostics, suggested by his experience and sagacity, he discerned the approach. On that account, he advised him, likewise, to defer, for some days, the sailing of the fleet bound for Spain. But Ovando refused his request, and despised his counsel. "Under circumstances," observes an elegant historian,\* "in which humanity would have afforded refuge to a stranger, Columbus was denied admittance into a country, of which he had discovered the existence, and acquired the possession; and his salutary warning was considered as the dream of a visionary prophet." The fleet sailed for Spain. The following night, the hurricane came on, with dreadful impetuosity. Aware of the danger, Columbus used precautions against it, by taking shelter in some wild bay or river of the island. Within two days, the predictions of Columbus were verified. The fleet destined for Spain experienced the fate, merited by the rashness and obstinacy of its commanders. Of eighteen ships, only two or three escaped. In this general wreck, perished Bovadilla, Roldan, and the greater part of those who had been most active in persecuting the Indians, and oppressing Columbus. Together with themselves, was swallowed up all the wealth which they had acquired by their cruelty and injustice: amongst the ships that escaped, one had on board all the effects of Columbus, which had been recovered from the ruins of his fortune; and that one was the only vessel which was enabled to continue her voyage to Spain.

Columbus left Hispaniola on the 14th of July, and steered towards the continent. After a tedious and dangerous voyage, he discovered Guanaia, an island not far distant from the coast of Honduras, and then bore away to the east, towards the gulf of Darien. In this navigation, he discovered all the coast of the continent, from Cape Gracios a Dios, to a harbour, which, on account of its beauty and security, he called Porto Bello: but he searched in vain for the imaginary strait, through which he expected to make his way into an unknown sea; and, though he went several times on shore, and advanced into the country, he did not penetrate so far, as to

\* Robertson,

cross the narrow isthmus which separates the gulf of Mexico from the great southern ocean. A beautiful island, at which Columbus stopped to procure refreshments, he called La Huerta, or the Garden. Directly opposite, on the main land, was an Indian village, named Cariari, situated on the bank of a delightful river. As soon as the inhabitants beheld the ships, they assembled on the coast, armed with bows and arrows, war-clubs and lances, prepared to defend their shores. When, however, they perceived that the Spaniards did not attempt to molest them, their hostility ceased, their curiosity began to predominate, and they made various pacific signals, waving their mantles like banners, and inviting the Spaniards to land. Finding that the strangers still declined to come on shore, the natives tried every means to dispel the distrust which might have been caused by their hostile demonstrations. One day, a boat cautiously approaching the shore, in quest of some place at which to procure water, a venerable looking Indian issued from amongst the trees, bearing a white banner on the end of a staff, as a signal of peace; and leading two girls, one about fourteen years of age, the other eight, having ornaments of gold about their necks. These he conducted to the boat, and delivered to the Spaniards; making signs that they were to be detained as hostages while the strangers should be on shore. The Spaniards now sallied forth with confidence, and filled their water-casks; the Indians remaining at a distance, and observing the strictest care, neither by word nor movement, to cause any new distrust. When the boats were about to return to the ships, the old Indian made signs that the young girls should be taken on board; nor would he admit any denial. Columbus was careful that the confidence thus placed in him should not be abused. After feasting the young females, and ordering them to be clothed and adorned with various ornaments, he sent them on shore. It was at this time, however, nearly dark, and the coast was deserted. They were under the necessity of returning to the ship, where they remained all night under the paternal guardianship of Columbus, who, the next morning, restored them to their friends.

On the following day, the adelantado endeavoured to collect information from the natives respecting the country, and ordered the notary of the squadron to write down the replies. The latter immediately prepared pen, ink, and paper, and proceeded to write; but, no sooner did the Indians behold



this strange and mysterious operation, than, mistaking it for some necromantic spell, intended to be wrought upon them, they fled, with terror, to the woods. Shortly afterwards, they returned, cautiously scattering a fragrant powder in the air, and burning some of it in such a direction that the smoke would be borne towards the Spaniards, by the wind: this was apparently intended to counteract any baleful spell, for they regarded their visitors as beings of a mysterious and supernatural order.

When examining one of the villages, the adelantado found, in a large house, several sepulchres. One contained a human body, embalmed. In another, there were two bodies, wrapped in cotton, and so preserved, as to be free from any disagreeable smell. They were adorned with the ornaments esteemed most precious by the individuals when living; and the sepulchres were decorated with rude carvings and paintings, representing various animals, and sometimes what appeared to be portraits of the deceased.

On the coast of Veragua, for the first time in the new world, the Spaniards beheld signs of solid architecture; having found a large mass of stucco, formed of stone and lime, a piece of which was carried away by Columbus, as a specimen, considering it an indication of his approach to countries where the arts were in a higher degree of cultivation.

Thus, briefly have we noticed some of the many objects of curiosity observed by the Spaniards in this interesting search. Like all the preceding voyages of the great discoverer, it was not free from vexation and peril. A repulse, experienced by a small colony left on the river Belem, in the province of Veragua—the first that the Spaniards met, from any of the American nations—was not the only misfortune that, in this voyage, befel Columbus. It was followed by a succession of all the disasters to which navigation is exposed. Furious hurricanes, with violent storms of thunder and lightning, threatened his leaky vessels with destruction; while his discontented crew, exhausted by fatigue, and destitute of provisions, were unwilling or unable to execute his commands. One of his ships perished; he was compelled to abandon another, as unfit for service; and, with the two which remained, he quitted that part of the continent, which, in his anguish, he named the Coast of Vexation; and bore away for Hispaniola. New distresses awaited him, in this voyage. He was driven back, by a violent tem-



pest, from the coast of Cuba, his ships were dashed against each other, and were so much shattered by the shock, that, with the utmost difficulty, they reached Jamaica; where he was constrained to run them aground, to prevent them from sinking.

June 24. Fortune seemed now to have assailed Columbus with her last and keenest shaft. He was cast ashore upon an island at a considerable distance from the only settlement of the Spaniards in America. His ships were ruined, beyond the possibility of being repaired. To convey an account of his situation to Hispaniola, appeared impracticable; and without this, it was in vain to expect relief. In his distress, he had recourse to the hospitable kindness of the natives; from whom, he obtained two of their canoes; in which small and misshapen boats, fit only for creeping along the coast, or crossing from one side of a bay to another, Mendez, a Spaniard, who, had several times before risked his life in the service of Columbus, and Fiesco, a Genoese, two gentlemen particularly attached to the admiral, gallantly offered to set out for Hispaniola, upon a voyage of forty leagues. Each had one of the canoes under his command; in which, were six Spaniards and ten Indians. They reached Cape Tiburon, in Hispaniola, in four days; and Mendez, partly by water, and partly by penetrating an unexplored wilderness, arrived at St. Domingo in ten days from their departure, after surmounting incredible dangers, and enduring so great a fatigue, that several of the Indians who accompanied them, sunk under it, and died.

The attention paid to them by the governor of Hispaniola was neither such as their courage merited, nor the distress of their fellow-sufferers required. From a mean jealousy of Columbus, Ovando was afraid of allowing him to set foot upon the island under his government; and eight months were spent by Mendez and Fiesco, in soliciting relief for their commander and associates, without any prospect of success.

1504. During this period, various passions agitated the mind of Columbus and his companions in adversity. After some time, the more timorous began to suspect that Mendez and Fiesco had miscarried in their daring attempt. At length, even the most sanguine concluded that they had perished; despair, heightened by disappointment, settled in every breast; in a transport of rage, forty-eight of the seamen, headed by Francisco de Porras, rose in open mutiny, threaten-

ed the life of Columbus, whom they reproached as the author of all their calamities, seized ten canoes, which the admiral had purchased from the Indians, and fled with them to a distant part of the island. Following the course taken by Mendez and Fiesco, they made repeated attempts to pass over to Hispaniola, but, either from their own misconduct, or the violence of the winds and current, their efforts were all unsuccessful. From their light structure, and their bottoms being round, the canoes were easily overturned, and required to be carefully balanced. They were now deeply laden by men unaccustomed to them, and as the sea rose, they frequently let in the water. Becoming alarmed, the Spaniards endeavoured to lighten them, by throwing overboard every thing that could be spared; retaining only their arms, and a part of their provisions. The danger augmented with the wind. They now compelled the Indians whom they had procured to accompany them, to leap into the sea, except such as were absolutely necessary to navigate the canoes. If they refused, they drove them overboard with the edge of the sword. The Indians were experienced swimmers, but the distance to land was too great for their strength. They kept about the canoes, therefore, taking hold of them, occasionally, to rest themselves and recover breath. As their weight disturbed the balance of the canoes, and threatened to overturn them, the Spaniards cut off their hands, and stabbed them with their swords. Some died by the weapons of these cruel men, others sank exhausted beneath the waves: thus, eighteen miserably perished, and none survived, except those who had been retained to manage the canoes.

With extreme difficulty, they were enabled to retrace their course. Enraged at this disappointment, they returned towards that part of the island where Columbus remained, threatening him with new insults and dangers. All his endeavours to reclaim them had no other effect than to increase their frenzy. The common safety made it necessary to oppose them with open force. Columbus, who had been long afflicted with gout, could not take the field. His brother, the adelantado, marched against them. In the first encounter, several of their most daring leaders were slain. The adelantado, whose strength was equal to his courage, closed with their captain, wounded, disarmed, and took him prisoner. The rest fled; and soon afterwards, they submitted, in a body, to Columbus, binding themselves, by the most solemn oaths, to

obey all his commands. Hardly was tranquillity re-established, when two vessels arrived from Hispaniola. Never was relief more unexpected, or more grateful. With transports of joy, the Spaniards quitted an island in which the unfeeling jealousy of Ovando had suffered them to languish above a year, exposed to misery in all its forms.

On the 13th of August, Columbus anchored in the harbour of St. Domingo; and on the 12th of September, he sailed with two ships, for Spain. The present voyage was not less unfortunate than the preceding. Disasters, similar to those which had accompanied him through life, continued to pursue him to the end of his career. One of his vessels, being disabled, was soon forced back to St. Domingo; the other, shattered by violent storms, sailed seven-hundred leagues with jury-masts, and reached, with difficulty, the port of St. Lucas.

There, he received intelligence of an event, the most fatal that could have befallen him, and which completed his misfortunes. This was the death of his patroness, queen Isabella; in whose justice, humanity, and favour, he had confided as his last resource. As soon as his health was, in some degree, re-established, he repaired to court, then held at Segovia; and, though he was received there with civility barely decent, he urged Ferdinand with one petition after another, demanding the punishment of his oppressors, and the restitution of all the privileges granted to him by the contract of 1492. Ferdinand amused him with fair words, and unmeaning promises. Instead of acceding to his claims, he proposed expedients in order to elude them, and spun out the affair with artifice so apparent, as plainly discovered his intention that it should never be terminated. The declining health of Columbus flattered Ferdinand with the hope of soon being relieved from an importunate suitor, and encouraged him to persevere in this illiberal plan. Nor was he deceived in his expectations. With a composure of mind, suitable to the magnanimity which distinguished his character, and with sentiments of piety becoming that supreme respect for religion, which he manifested in every occurrence of life, Columbus ended his days, at Valladolid, on the 20th of May, 1506, in the 71st year of his age.\*

\* His body was deposited in the convent of St. Francisco, at Valladolid. His remains were conveyed afterwards, in 1513, by the king's

In his will, Columbus enjoined his son Diego, and whomsoever afterwards should inherit his estates, without regarding any dignities and titles that might be granted by the king, always to sign himself simply, "The Admiral;" by way of perpetuating in his family his real source of greatness.



## CHAPTER VI.

EXECUTION OF ANACOANA, BY OVANDO.—DISCOVERY OF YUCATAN.—CUBA ASCERTAINED TO BE AN ISLAND.—DON DIEGO COLUMBUS ARRIVES AT HISPANIOLA.—FLORIDA DISCOVERED, BY PONCE DE LEON.—THE PACIFIC OCEAN DISCOVERED BY BALBOA, ACCOMPANIED BY PIZARRO.—BALBOA IS SUPERSEDED IN THE GOVERNMENT OF DARIEN, BY PEDRARIAS, AND PUT TO DEATH.

1505. WHILE Columbus was employed in his last voyage, several events worthy of notice occurred in Hispaniola. The province anciently named Xaragua, which extends from the fertile plain where Leogane is now situated, to the western extremity of the island, was subject to a beautiful young female cazique, (the widow of Caonabo,) named Anacoana, highly respected by the natives. From that partial fondness with which the women of America were attached to the Europeans, she had always courted the friendship of the Spaniards, and loaded them with benefits. But, some of the

command, to the chapel of St. Ann, in the Carthusian monastery at Seville; in which chapel, were likewise deposited the remains of his son Diego, who died in the village of Montalban, in Spain, in 1526. Ten years afterwards, in 1536, the bodies of Columbus and his son Diego were removed to Hispaniola, and interred in the cathedral of the city of St. Domingo. But even here, they were not suffered to mingle with their kindred earth; having since been again disinterred, and conveyed to Havanna, in the island of Cuba. This occurred at the termination of a war between France and Spain, in 1795; when all the Spanish possessions in the island of Hispaniola, were ceded to the republic of France. The remains were disinterred on the 20th of December, in that year; the next day they were put on board a brigantine, called the Discoverer; and, on the 15th of January, 1796, they arrived at Havanna, and were there deposited in the wall, on the right side of the grand altar in the cathedral.



adherents of Roldan having settled in her country, were so much exasperated at her endeavouring to restrain their excesses, that they accused her of having formed a plan to throw off the yoke, and to exterminate the Spaniards. Ovando, though he well knew how little credit was due to so profligate men, marched, without further inquiry, towards Xaragua, with three-hundred foot-soldiers, armed with swords, arquebusses, and cross-bows, and seventy horsemen, with cuirasses, bucklers, and lances. Lest the Indians might be alarmed at this hostile appearance, he reported that his sole intention was, in the most respectful manner, to visit Anacoana, to whom his countrymen had been much indebted, and to regulate, with her, the mode of levying the tribute payable to the king of Spain. In order to receive this illustrious guest with due honour, Anacoana assembled the principal men in her dominions, to the number of three-hundred; and, advancing at the head of these, accompanied by a great crowd of persons of inferior rank, she welcomed Ovando with songs and dances, according to the mode of the country, and conducted him to the place of her abode. There, he was feasted for some days, with all the kindness of simple hospitality, and amused with the games and spectacles usual amongst the Indians on occasions of festivity and mirth. But, amidst the security inspired by this entertainment, Ovando was meditating the destruction of his unsuspecting hostess and her subjects; and the mean perfidy with which he executed this scheme, equalled his barbarity in forming it. Under colour of exhibiting to the Indians the parade of a European tournament, he advanced with his troops in battle array, towards the house in which Anacoana and forty of her chieftains were assembled. The infantry took possession of all the avenues leading to the village, while the horsemen encompassed the house. These movements were objects of admiration, without any mixture of fear, until, on a previously concerted signal, the sounding of a trumpet, the Spaniards suddenly drew their swords, and rushed upon the Indians, defenceless, and astonished at an act of treachery which exceeded the conception of undesigning men. In a moment, Anacoana was secured. All her attendants were seized and bound. Fire was set to the house; and, without examination or conviction, all these unhappy persons, the most illustrious in their own country, were consumed in the flames. Anacoana was reserved for a more ignominious fate. She

was carried in chains to St. Domingo ; and, after the formality of a trial before Spanish judges, she was condemned, on the evidence of the very men who had betrayed her, and hanged in the presence of the people whom she had so signally befriended.

After the massacre of Xaragua, the destruction of its inhabitants still continued. The favourite nephew of Anacoana, the cazique Guaora, who had fled to the mountains, was hunted like a wild beast, until he was taken, and likewise hanged. For six months, the Spaniards continued to ravage the country with horse and foot, under the pretext of quelling insurrections. Having at length driven the wretched Indians from their last places of concealment, destroyed many, and reduced the survivors to the most deplorable misery and abject submission, the whole of that part of the island was considered as restored to good order ; and, in commemoration of this great triumph, Ovando founded a town near the lake, which he called Santa Maria de la verdadera Paz—St. Mary of the true Peace.

The conquest of Hispaniola may at this period be pronounced complete. Overawed and humbled by the atrocious treatment of the inhabitants of Xaragua, the people of all the provinces of that extensive island submitted, without further resistance, to the Spanish yoke.

1506. The political conduct of Ovando was actuated by that combination of heterogeneous principles, which influenced nearly every person in that age of sophistry and imperfect moral education. He governed the Spaniards with wisdom and justice, not inferior to the rigour with which he treated the Indians. He founded several new towns in different parts of the island, and allured inhabitants to them, by the concession of various immunities. He endeavoured to turn the attention of the Spaniards to some branch of industry, more useful than searching for gold in the mines. Some slips of sugar-cane having been brought from the Canary islands by way of experiment, they were found to thrive with such increase in the rich soil and warm climate to which they were transplanted, that their cultivation soon became an object of commerce. Extensive plantations were commenced ; sugar-works were erected, and, in a few years, the manufacture of this commodity was the chief occupation of the inhabitants of Hispaniola, and the most considerable source of their wealth.

1507. The prudent endeavours of Ovando to promote the welfare of the colony, were powerfully seconded by Ferdinand. He erected, at Seville, a court, distinguished by the title of *Casa de Contractacion*, or Board of Trade; composed of persons eminent for rank and abilities, to whom he committed the administration of American affairs; and he gave a regular form to ecclesiastical government in America, by nominating archbishops, bishops, and deans, together with clergymen of subordinate ranks.

1508. But, notwithstanding this attention to the policy and welfare of the colony, a calamity impended, which threatened its dissolution. The original inhabitants, on whose labour the Spaniards in Hispaniola relied for their prosperity, and even their existence, wasted so rapidly, as to indicate unavoidable destruction to the whole race. When Columbus discovered Hispaniola, the number of its inhabitants was computed to be at least a million. They were now, in the space of sixteen years, reduced to sixty thousand. Thus deprived of their accustomed instruments of labour, the Spaniards found it impossible to extend their improvements, or even to carry on the works which they had already begun. In order to provide an immediate remedy for an evil so alarming, Ovando proposed to transport the inhabitants of the Lucayo islands to Hispaniola, under pretence that they might, with more facility, be civilized, and, with greater advantage, instructed in the christian religion, if united to the Spanish colony, and placed under the immediate inspection of the missionaries. Ferdinand consented to this hypocritical scheme. Several vessels were despatched to the Lucayos, the commanders of which informed the natives, that they came from a delicious country, in which resided the departed ancestors of the Indians, by whom, they were sent to invite their descendants to resort thither, to partake of the bliss enjoyed by happy spirits. That simple people easily fell into this diabolical snare. Above forty thousand were decoyed into Hispaniola, to share in the miseries inflicted upon the inhabitants of that island, and to mingle their groans and tears with the sorrows of that wretched race of men.

In the following year, Juan Ponce de Leon, who commanded under Ovando, in the eastern district of Hispaniola, was permitted to pass over into Porto Rico, which Columbus had discovered in his second voyage, and attempt making a settlement in the island. This was easily effected, by an of-

ficer, eminent for conduct, no less than for courage. In a few years, Porto Rico was subjected to the Spanish government; the natives were reduced to servitude; and, being treated with the same degree of inconsiderate rigour as their neighbours in Hispaniola, the aboriginal inhabitants were soon exterminated. About the same time, Juan Diaz de Solis, in conjunction with Vincent Yanez Pinzon, one of the original companions of Columbus, made a voyage to the continent, and discovered a new and extensive province, afterwards known by the name of Yucatan; and, by the orders of Ovando, Sebastian de Ocampo sailed around Cuba, and first ascertained that this country, which Columbus had always supposed to be a part of the continent, was a large island.

This voyage around Cuba was one of the last occurrences under the administration of Ovando. Ever since the death of Columbus, his son, Don Diego, had been employed in soliciting Ferdinand to grant him the offices of viceroy and admiral in the new world, together with all the other immunities and profits which had descended to him by inheritance, in consequence of the original contract with his father. At length, he endeavoured to obtain, by a legal sentence, what he could not procure from the favour of an interested monarch. With the royal permission, he commenced a suit against king Ferdinand, before the council which managed Indian affairs; and that court, with an integrity which reflects honour upon its proceedings, decided unanimously against the king, and sustained Diego's claim to the vice-royalty, together with all the other privileges stipulated in the agreement. Even after this decree, Ferdinand's repugnance to put a subject in possession of so extensive rights, might have raised new obstacles, if Don Diego had not formed an alliance which interested very powerful individuals in the success of his claims. The sentence of the council of the Indies entitled him to a rank so elevated, and a fortune so opulent, that he found no difficulty in concluding a marriage with Donna Maria, daughter of Don Ferdinand de Toledo, grand commander of Leon, and niece of the celebrated duke of Alva; a nobleman of the first rank, and nearly related to the king. The duke and his family espoused so warmly the cause of their new ally, that Ferdinand could not resist their solicitations. He recalled Ovando, and appointed Don Diego his successor; though, even in conferring this favour, he could not conceal his jealousy; for he allowed him to assume only



the title of governor, not that of viceroy, which, it had been adjudged, he had a right to use.

1509. Don Diego quickly repaired to Hispaniola, accompanied by his brother, Don Fernando; his two uncles, Don Bartholomew and Don Diego; his wife, whom the courtesy of the Spaniards honoured with the title of vice-queen; and a numerous retinue of cavaliers, with their wives, and of young ladies of rank and family, more distinguished, it is hinted, by a cotemporary historian, for high blood than large fortunes, who were sent out to find wealthy husbands in the new world. He lived with a splendour and magnificence hitherto unknown in the new world; and the family of Columbus seemed now to enjoy the honours and rewards due to his inventive genius, of which he himself had been cruelly defrauded.

But no benefit accrued to the unhappy natives, from this change of governors. Don Diego was not only authorized, by a royal edict, to continue the *repartimientos*, or distribution of Indians, but the particular number which he might grant to every person according to his rank in the colony, was specified. He availed himself of that permission, and, soon after he arrived at St. Domingo, he divided those Indians who were still unappropriated, amongst his relations and attendants.

The next care of the new governor, was to comply with instructions which he received from the king, respecting the settling of a colony in Cubagua, a small island discovered by Columbus in his third voyage. Though this barren spot hardly yielded subsistence to its wretched inhabitants, so great quantities were found on its coast, of those oysters which produce pearls, that it did not long escape the inquisitive avarice of the Spaniards, and became a place of considerable resort. Large fortunes were acquired by the fishery of pearls, which was pursued with extraordinary ardour. The Indians, especially those from the Lucayo islands, were compelled to dive for them; a dangerous and unhealthy employment, which was an additional calamity, and contributed not a little to the extinction of that devoted race.

Though ten years had elapsed, since Columbus discovered the main land of America, the Spaniards had hitherto established no settlement in any part of it. What had been so long neglected, was now attempted, and with considerable vigour. This scheme was projected by Alonzo de Ojeda,

who had already made two voyages of discovery, by which he acquired considerable reputation, but not wealth. His character, notwithstanding, for intrepidity and conduct, easily procured him associates, who advanced the money requisite to defray the charges of the expedition. About the same time, Diego de Nicuessa, who had acquired a large fortune in Hispaniola, formed a similar design. Ferdinand encouraged both; and, though he refused to advance the smallest sum of money, was extremely liberal of titles and patents. He erected two governments on the continent; one extending from Cape de Vela to the gulf of Darien; the other, from that point to Cape Gracios a Dios. The former was given to Ojeda, the latter to Nicuessa. Ojeda fitted out a ship and two brigantines, with three-hundred men; Nicuessa, six vessels, with seven-hundred-and-eighty men. They sailed about the same time from St. Domingo, for their respective governments. They found the natives in those regions, of a character very different from that of their countrymen in the islands. They were fierce and warlike. Their arrows were dipped in a poison so noxious, that every wound was followed by certain death. In one encounter, they slew above seventy of Ojeda's followers, and the Spaniards, for the first time, were taught to dread the inhabitants of the new world, and were justly punished for their violent, cruel, and absurd dictation of their peculiar religious mysteries, to a people wholly incapable of comprehending what, even by themselves, are declared to be beyond the reach of human reason, in its most highly cultivated state. Nicuessa was opposed by a people equally resolute in defence of their possessions. Nothing could soften their ferocity. Every disaster which can be accumulated on the unfortunate, combined to complete the ruin of his party. They were involved in a succession of calamities, the bare recital of which, strikes one with horror. Though they received two considerable reinforcements from Hispaniola, the greater part of those who had engaged in this unhappy expedition perished, in less than a year, in extreme misery. A few who survived, settled, as a feeble colony, at Santa Maria el Antigua, on the gulf of Darien, under the command of Vasco Nugnez de Balboa; who, in the most desperate exigencies, displayed such courage and conduct, as first gained the confidence of his countrymen, and marked him out as their leader, in more splendid and successful undertakings. Nor was Balboa the only adventurer in this ex-

pedition, who will appear with lustre in more important scenes. Francisco Pizarro was one of Ojeda's companions; and Hernan Cortes, whose name became still more famous, had likewise engaged early in this enterprise, but by the interposition of that good fortune, which accompanied him in his subsequent adventures, he was taken sick at St. Domingo, before the departure of the fleet, and detained there by a serious illness.

1510. Yet, notwithstanding the unfortunate issue of this expedition, the Spaniards were not deterred from engaging in new schemes of a similar nature. When Don Diego Columbus proposed to conquer the island of Cuba, and to establish a colony there, many persons of high distinction in Hispaniola engaged with alacrity in the measure. He gave

1511. the command of the troops destined for that service to Diego Velasquez, one of his father's companions in his second voyage. Three-hundred men were deemed sufficient for the conquest of an island, filled with inhabitants, and more than seven-hundred miles in length. The only obstruction offered to the Spaniards, was by Hatuey, a cazique who had fled from Hispaniola, and taken possession of the eastern extremity of Cuba. He stood on the defensive, at their first landing, and endeavoured to drive them back to their ships. His feeble troops, however, were soon routed and dispersed, and he himself being taken prisoner, Velasquez, according to the barbarous maxims of the Spaniards, considered him as a slave who had taken arms against his master, and condemned him to the flames. When Hatuey was fastened to the stake, a Franciscan friar labouring to convert him, promised him immediate admittance into the joys of heaven, if he would embrace the christian faith.—“Are there any Spaniards,” says he, after some pause, “in that region of bliss which you describe?”—“Yes,” replied the monk, “but only such as are worthy and good.”—“The best of them,” returned the indignant cazique, “have neither worth nor goodness: I will not go to a place where I may meet one of that accursed race.”

This dreadful example of vengeance struck the people of Cuba with such terror, that they scarcely made any opposition to the progress of their invaders; and Velasquez annexed this extensive and fertile island to the Spanish monarchy, without the loss of a man.

1512. The facility with which that important conquest was made, served as an incitement to other undertakings. Juan Ponce de Leon, having acquired both fame and riches by the reduction of Porto Rico, was impatient to engage in some new enterprise. He fitted out three ships, at his own expence; and, directing his course towards the Lucayo islands, after touching at several of them, as well as of the Bahama islands, he steered to the south-west, and discovered a country, hitherto unknown to the Spaniards, which he called Florida, on account of its gay and beautiful appearance.

Ponce de Leon was not induced to undertake this voyage, merely by the passion of searching for new countries: he was influenced by one of those visionary ideas, which, at that time, often mingled with the spirit of discovery, and rendered it active. A tradition prevailed amongst the natives of Porto Rico, that, in the isle of Bimini, one of the Lucayos, there was a fountain, of so wonderful virtue, as to renew the youth, and recall the vigour of every person who bathed in its salutary waters. In the hope of finding this grand restorative, Ponce de Leon and his followers ranged through the islands, searching, with fruitless solicitude and labour, for the fountain, which was the chief object of their expedition.

Soon after the voyage to Florida, a discovery, of much greater importance, was made, in another part of America. Balboa, having been appointed governor of the small colony at Santa Maria, in Darien, by the voluntary suffrage of his associates, was so desirous to obtain from the crown a confirmation of their election, that he despatched one of his officers to Spain, in order to solicit a royal commission, which might invest him with a legal title to the supreme command. In order to merit the dignity to which he aspired, by performing some signal service, he made frequent inroads into the adjacent country, and collected a considerable quantity of gold, which abounded more in that part of the continent, than in the islands. In one of these excursions, the Spaniards contended with such eagerness amongst themselves, about the division of some gold, that they were on the point of proceeding to acts of violence. A young cazique who was present, astonished at the high value which they attached to a thing of which he did not discern the use, tumbled the gold out of the balance, with indignation; and, turning to



the Spaniards, "Why do you quarrel," says he, "about such a trifle? I will conduct you to a region, where the metal which seems the chief object of your admiration and desire, is so common, that the meanest utensils are formed of it."—Transported with what they heard, Balboa and his companions enquired eagerly where this happy country lay, and how they might arrive at it. The cazique informed them, that, at the distance of six suns—that is, of six days' journey—towards the south, they would behold another ocean, near which this wealthy kingdom was situated; but, if they intended to attack that powerful state, they must assemble forces far superior in number and strength to those with which they now appeared.

This was the first intimation received by the Spaniards, concerning the great southern ocean, or the opulent and extensive country known afterwards by the name of Peru. Balboa immediately concluded that the ocean which the cazique mentioned, was that for which Columbus had searched without success, in this part of America, in the hope of opening a more direct communication with the East Indies; and he conjectured that the rich territory which had been described to him must be a part of that vast and opulent region of the earth.

1513. The isthmus of Darien is not above sixty miles in breadth; but this neck of land is strengthened, through its whole extent, with a chain of lofty mountains, covered with forests almost impassable by the foot of man. The valleys, also, in that moist climate, where it rains during two thirds of the year, are marshy, and so frequently overflowed, that the inhabitants find it necessary, in many places, to build their houses upon trees; and large rivers rush down, with impetuous current, from the high grounds. To march across this unexplored country, with no other guides than Indians, whose fidelity could be little trusted, was, on all those accounts, the boldest enterprise on which the Spaniards had hitherto ventured in the new world. But the intrepidity of Balboa was such as distinguished him amongst his countrymen, at a period when every adventurer was conspicuous for daring courage. For this expedition, he was able to muster only one-hundred-and-ninety men. But they were hardy veterans, inured to the climate of America, and ready to follow him through every danger. A thousand Indians attended them, to carry their provisions; and, to complete their warlike ar-

ray, they took with them several of those fierce dogs, which were no less formidable than destructive to their naked enemies.

Balboa set out upon this important expedition on the first of September, about the time when the periodical rains begin to abate. He proceeded by sea, and without any difficulty, to the territories of a cazique whose friendship he had gained; but no sooner did he begin to advance into the interior of the country, than he was retarded by every obstacle that he had apprehended, from the nature of the territory, or the disposition of the inhabitants. When the Spaniards had penetrated a considerable way into the mountains, a powerful cazique appeared in a narrow pass, with a numerous body of his subjects, to obstruct their progress. But, having dispersed the Indians, with great slaughter, the Spaniards continued their march. Though their guides had represented the breadth of the isthmus to be a journey of only six days, they had already spent twenty-five in forcing their way through the woods and mountains. At length, the Indians assured them, that from the top of the next mountain, they would discover the ocean which was the object of their wishes. When with infinite toil, they had climbed up the greater part of that steep ascent, Balboa commanded his men to halt, and advanced alone to the summit, that he might be the first to enjoy a spectacle which he had so long desired. "As soon as he beheld the South Sea," observes an elegant historian, "stretching, in endless prospect below him, he fell upon his knees, and, lifting up his hands to Heaven, returned thanks to God, who had conducted him to a discovery so beneficial to his country, and so honourable to himself. His followers observing his transports of joy, rushed forward, to join in his wonder, exultation, and gratitude. They held on their course with alacrity, to the shore; when Balboa, advancing up to the middle in the waves, with his buckler and sword, took possession of that ocean, in the name of the king his master."

That part of the great Pacific or Southern ocean, first discovered by Balboa, still retains the name of the Gulf of St. Michael, which he gave to it, and is situated to the east of Panama. The people on the coast informed him that there was a mighty and opulent kingdom at a considerable distance towards the south-east, the inhabitants of which had tame animals to carry their burthens. In order to give the Spani-

ards an idea of these, they drew on the sand the figure of lamas or sheep, afterwards found in Peru, which the Peruvians had taught to perform such services as they described. As the lama, in its form, nearly resembles the camel, a beast of burthen deemed peculiar to Asia, this circumstance, in conjunction with the discovery of the pearls, another noted production of that country, tended to confirm the Spaniards in their mistaken theory with respect to the vicinity of the new world to the East Indies.

Impatient, however, as was Balboa to visit this unknown country, his prudence restrained him from attempting to invade it with a small party of men, exhausted by fatigue, and weakened by disease. He determined to lead back his men to their settlement of Santa Maria, at Darien, and to return next season with a force more adequate to so arduous an enterprise. None of Balboa's officers more distinguished themselves in this service, than Francisco Pizarro, or assisted with greater courage and ardour in opening a communication with those countries, in which he was destined soon to act a most conspicuous and memorable part.

1514. After his return to Santa Maria, Balboa immediately sent information to Spain, of the important discovery which he had made, and solicited a reinforcement of a thousand men. The first account of the discovery of the new world, hardly occasioned greater joy, than the unexpected tidings that a passage was at last found to the great southern ocean: yet, notwithstanding Balboa's recent services, by which Ferdinand now hoped to participate with Portugal in the wealth which flowed from her settlements and conquests in the east, Ferdinand was so ungenerous as to appoint Pedrarias Davila governor of Darien.

Pedrarias was intrusted with the command of fifteen stout vessels, and twelve-thousand soldiers; and so enthusiastic was the ardour of the Spanish gentlemen, to follow a leader who was about to conduct them to a country, where, as fame reported, they had only to throw their nets into the sea, and draw out gold, that fifteen hundred embarked on board the fleet.

1515. Although, at the time when Pedrarias reached the gulf of Darien, Balboa could muster four-hundred-and-fifty men, yet he submitted with implicit obedience to the will of his sovereign. Pedrarias soon felt the embarrassments incident to the office which he had eagerly desired.

The village of Santa Maria was seated in a rich plain, environed with marshes and woods. The constitution of Europeans was unable to withstand the pestilential influence of such a situation, in a climate naturally so noxious, and at a season so peculiarly unhealthy. A violent malady destroyed many of the soldiers who accompanied Pedrarias; and an extreme scarcity of provisions augmented the distress. Within a month, above six-hundred persons perished, in the utmost misery. Dejection and despair spread throughout the colony. Many persons solicited their dismissal, and were glad to relinquish all their hopes of wealth, in order to escape from that pernicious region. Ferdinand became sensible, at length, of his imprudence, in superseding the most active and experienced officer that he had in the new world; and, by way of compensation to Balboa, appointed him adelantado, or lieutenant-governor of the countries on the South Sea. At the same time, he enjoined Pedrarias to support Balboa in all his operations, and to consult with him concerning every measure that he himself pursued.

They were at length brought to a reconciliation; and, to cement the union more firmly, Pedrarias agreed to give his daughter in marriage to Balboa. The first effect of their  
1516. concord was, that Balboa was permitted to make several short incursions into the country. These, he conducted with such prudence, as added to the reputation which he had already acquired: many adventurers resorted to him, and, with the countenance and aid of Pedrarias, he began to prepare for his expedition to the South Sea: but, when ready to sail towards Peru, Pedrarias, dreading the prosperity and elevation of a man whom he had so deeply injured, under pretexts which were false, but plausible, desired Balboa to postpone his voyage for a short time, and, to repair to Acla, that he might have an interview with him: there, he was immediately arrested, accused of disloyalty to the king, and an intention to revolt against the governor, sentenced to die, and executed.

On the death of Balboa, the expedition planned by him was relinquished. By his patronage at court, Pedrarias was not only screened from punishment, but continued in power. Soon afterwards, he obtained permission to remove the colony from its unwholesome station of Santa Maria, to Panama, on the opposite side of the isthmus; and though by the change, it did not gain much in point of health, the commodious



situation of this new settlement contributed greatly to facilitate the subsequent conquests of the Spaniards in the extensive countries situated on the southern ocean.



## CHAPTER VII.

THE RIO DE JANEIRO, AND RIO DE PLATA, DISCOVERED BY DE SOLIS—HE IS SLAIN BY THE NATIVES.—LAS CASAS ADVOCATES THE FREEDOM OF THE INDIANS, AND THE SLAVERY OF THE NEGROES.

DURING these transactions in Darien, several important events occurred, with respect to the discovery, the conquest, and government of other provinces in the new world. On the first day of January, 1516, Juan Diaz de Solis, despatched by the king of Spain, for the purpose of opening a communication with the Molucca or Spice islands by the west, entered a river, in South America, which he called Janeiro; and, proceeding along the coast, he discovered a spacious bay, which he found to be the mouth of a vast river named by him Rio de Plata; there, when endeavouring to land, De Solis and several of his crew were slain by the natives. Discouraged by the loss of their commander, the surviving Spaniards, without aiming at any further discovery, returned to Europe.

Notwithstanding that this attempt proved abortive, it was not without future benefit. It turned the attention of ingenious men to this course of navigation, and prepared the way for a more fortunate voyage, by which, a few years afterwards, the great design which Ferdinand had in view was accomplished.

Though the Spaniards were thus actively employed in extending their discoveries and settlements in America, they still considered Hispaniola as their principal colony, and the seat of their colonial government. The number of Indians in the island, was now reduced to fourteen-thousand. The violent operations of Rodrigo Albuquerque, the new distributor of that unhappy race, revived the zeal of the Dominicans against the *repartimientos*, and called forth an advocate

for that oppressed people, who possessed all the courage, the talents, and activity, requisite in supporting so desperate a cause. This was Bartholomew de las Casas, a native of Seville, and one of the clergymen sent out with Columbus on his second voyage to Hispaniola. He was then only nineteen years of age. He had early adopted the opinion prevalent amongst ecclesiastics, with respect to the unlawfulness of reducing the natives to servitude, and, that he might demonstrate the sincerity of his conviction, he relinquished all the Indians who had fallen to his own share in the division of the inhabitants amongst their conquerors; declaring that he should ever bewail his own misfortune and guilt, in having exercised, for a moment, this impious dominion over his fellow-creatures. The impossibility, however, of effecting any improvements in America, unless the Spanish planters could command the labour of the natives, seemed an insuperable objection to his plan of treating them as free subjects. In order to provide some remedy for this, without which he found it in vain to mention his scheme, Las Casas proposed to purchase a sufficient number of negroes from the Portuguese settlements on the coast of Africa, and to transport them to America, in order that they might be employed as slaves in working the mines and cultivating the ground. One of the first mercantile advantages which the Portuguese had derived from their discoveries in Africa, arose from the trade in slaves. Various circumstances concurred in reviving this odious commerce, which had long been abolished in Europe, and which, to express the sentiments of a highly esteemed historian, "is no less repugnant to the feelings of humanity, than to the principles of religion."—As early as the year 1503, a few negro slaves had been sent into the new world. In 1511, Ferdinand permitted their importation in greater numbers. They were found to be a more robust and hardy race than the natives of America; and the labour of one negro was computed to be equal to that of four Indians. Cardinal Ximenes, however, the prime minister of Spain, when solicited to encourage this commerce, peremptorily rejected the proposition; because he perceived the iniquity of reducing one race of men to slavery, while consulting about the means of restoring liberty to another. But Las Casas, from the inconsistency natural to men who hurry with headlong impetuosity towards a favourite point, was incapable of making this distinction. In the warmth of his zeal to save the Americans

from the yoke, he pronounced it to be lawful and expedient to impose one still heavier upon the Africans. Unfortunately for the latter, the plan of Las Casas was adopted. Charles V. the grandson and successor of Ferdinand, granted a patent to one of his Flemish favourites, containing an exclusive right of importing, into America, four-thousand negroes: the favourite sold his patent to some Genoese merchants for twenty-five-thousand ducats; and they were the first who brought into a regular form that commerce for slaves, which, from that period, until it was first discontinued by Great Britain,\* was carried on to so amazing an extent, by nearly every christian nation in the world.

But the Genoese merchants demanded so high a price for their negroes, that the number imported into Hispaniola, made no perceptible change in the state of the colony. Las Casas therefore despaired of procuring any relief for the Indians, in those places where the Spaniards were already settled. The evil had become so inveterate there, as not to admit of a cure. He applied for a grant of the unoccupied country, stretching along the sea-coast, from the gulf of Paria, to the western frontier of that province now known by the name of Santa Martha. He proposed to settle there with a colony composed of husbandmen, labourers, and ecclesiastics. He engaged, in the space of two years, to civilize ten-thousand of the natives, and to instruct them so thoroughly in the arts of social life, that, from the fruits of their industry, an annual revenue of fifteen-thousand ducats should arise to the king.

After consulting with his ministers, Charles issued a patent, granting to Las Casas the district of Cumana, with full power to establish a colony there, according to his own plan. The benevolent enthusiast urged forward the preparations for the voyage with his usual ardour. But his progress, in obtaining husbandmen and labourers, was extremely slow. He could prevail on no more than two-hundred persons to accompany him. Nothing, however, could damp his zeal; and with this slender train, he set sail. The first place at which he touched, was the island of Porto Rico. There, he received an account of a new obstacle to the execution of his scheme, more insuperable than any that he had hitherto encountered. In order to procure slaves at an easier rate, some of the Spani-

ards in Hispaniola fitted out vessels to cruise along the coast of the continent. In places where they found themselves inferior in strength, they traded with the natives; when they could surprise or overpower them, they carried them off by force, and sold them as slaves. The Spanish name became detested all over the continent. Whenever any ships appeared, the inhabitants either fled to the woods, or rushed to the shore, in arms. They forced some parties of the Spaniards to retreat with precipitation; they cut off others; and, in the violence of their resentment against the whole nation, they murdered two Dominican missionaries, whose zeal had prompted them to settle in the province of Cumana. The Spaniards of Hispaniola determined to inflict exemplary punishment, not only upon the perpetrators of that crime, but upon the whole race. They despatched to Cumana a squadron of vessels under the command of Ocampo, with orders to lay waste the whole country with fire and sword. This armament, Las Casas found at Porto Rico, in his way to the continent; and, as Ocampo refused to defer his voyage, he immediately perceived that it would be impossible to attempt the execution of his pacific plan, in a country destined to be the seat of war and desolation.

In order to provide against the effects of this unfortunate incident, he sailed immediately for St. Domingo, leaving his followers cantoned amongst the planters in Porto Rico. By his activity and perseverance, he obtained a small body of troops, to protect him and his colony at their first landing. But, on his return to Porto Rico, he found that the diseases of the climate had been fatal to several of his people; and that others, having obtained employment in that island, refused to follow him. With the few that remained, he set sail, and landed in Cumana. He made the best provision in his power, for their safety and subsistence; but, as his utmost efforts availed little, towards securing either the one or the other, he returned to Hispaniola, in order to solicit more effectual aid for their preservation. Soon after his departure, the natives, having discovered the feeble and defenceless state of the Spaniards, assembled secretly, attacked them with a fury natural to men exasperated by many injuries, cut off a great number, and compelled the rest to fly, in the utmost consternation, to Cubagua. The small colony, settled there on account of the pearl fishery, catching the panic with which their countrymen had been seized, abandoned the



island, and not a Spaniard remained in any part of the continent, or adjacent islands, from the gulf of Paria to the borders of Darien. Astonished at this succession of disasters, Las Casas was ashamed to make his appearance, after this fatal termination of all his splendid schemes; he shut himself up in the convent of Dominicans at St. Domingo, and soon afterwards assumed the habit of that order.\*

A work entitled "The Destruction of the Indians," and numerous other writings by Las Casas, show him to have been a most pious and amiable man, and highly deserving of that celebrity which his name has obtained throughout the civilized world,



## CHAPTER VIII.

### DISCOVERY OF MEXICO BY GRIJALVA.

WE return now to the history of the Spanish discoveries, as they occur in the order of time.

Several officers who had served under Pedrarias, in Darien, associated for the purpose of undertaking a voyage of discovery. They persuaded Francisco Hernandez Cordova, an opulent planter in Cuba, and a man of distinguished courage, to join them in the adventure, and chose him to be their commander. Velasquez, who was then deputy-governor of Cuba, not only approved of the design, but aided in its execution. He and Cordova advanced money for purchasing three small vessels, and furnishing them with every thing requisite, either for traffic or for war. On board of these, one-hundred-and-ten men embarked, and sailed from St. Jago de Cuba, on the 8th of February, 1517. On the twenty-first day after their departure from St. Jago, they saw land, which proved to be Cape Catoche, the eastern point of that large peninsula which still retains its original name of Yucatan. As they approached the shore, five canoes came off, full of people, decently clad in cotton garments; an astonishing

\* Worn out with infirmities, he left America in 1551 and returned to Madrid, where he died in 1566.

spectacle to the Spaniards, who had found every other part of America possessed by naked savages. Cordova endeavoured, by small presents, to gain their good will. They invited the Spaniards to visit their habitations: they accordingly landed, and, as they advanced into the country, they observed, with new wonder, some large houses built of stone. But they soon found, that, if the people of Yucatan surpassed their countrymen in domestic improvement, they were likewise more skilful in the art of war. Though the cazique received Cordova with many tokens of friendship, he had posted a considerable body of his subjects in ambush, behind a thicket, who, on a given signal, rushed out, and attacked the Spaniards with great boldness, and some degree of military order. By the first flight of their arrows, fifteen of the Spaniards were wounded; but the Indians were so terrified by the sudden explosion of the fire-arms, and so surprised at the execution done by them, as well as by the cross-bows, and other weapons of their new enemies, that they fled with precipitation.

The Spaniards seemed equally alarmed. Cordova quitted a country where he had met so fierce a reception, carrying off two prisoners, together with the ornaments of a small temple, which he had plundered in his retreat.

He continued his course to the west, and on the 16th, arrived at Campeachy. As the water began to fail on board his vessels, he entered the mouth of a river at Potonchan, and landed all his troops, in order to protect the sailors while employed in filling the casks: but, notwithstanding this precaution, the natives rushed down upon them so furiously, that forty-seven of the Spaniards were killed on the spot, and one man only, of the whole body, escaped unhurt. Their commander, though wounded in twelve different places, directed the retreat with presence of mind equal to the courage with which he had led them on to the engagement, and with much difficulty they regained their ships. After this fatal repulse, nothing remained but to hasten back to Cuba with their shattered forces. In their passage thither, they suffered the most exquisite distress, from want of water: some of them, sinking under their calamities, died by the way; Cordova died soon after they landed at Cuba.

Notwithstanding the disastrous conclusion of this expedition, it served rather to animate than to damp the spirit of enterprise amongst the Spaniards. Great numbers offered to

engage in a new expedition. Solicitous to distinguish himself by some achievement, so meritorious as might entitle him to claim the government of Cuba, independent of the admiral, Velasquez not only encouraged their ardour, but, at his own expense, fitted out four ships for the voyage. Two-hundred-and-forty volunteers, amongst whom were several persons of rank and fortune, embarked in this enterprise. The command was given to Juan de Grijalva, a young man of known merit and courage, with instructions to observe attentively the nature of the countries which he should discover, to barter for gold, and, if circumstances were inviting, to settle a colony in some proper station. He sailed from St. Jago de Cuba on the 8th of April, 1518. The first land which they descried, was the island of Cozumel, to the east of Yucatan; but, as all the inhabitants fled to the woods and mountains at the approach of the Spaniards, they made only a short stay there, and, without any remarkable occurrence, they reached Potonchan, on the opposite side of the peninsula. From Potonchan, they continued their voyage towards the west, keeping as near as possible to the shore, and casting anchor every evening, from dread of the dangerous accidents to which they might be exposed in an unknown sea. During the day, their eyes were turned continually towards land, with a mixture of surprise and wonder at the beauty of the country, as well as the novelty of the objects. Many villages were scattered along the coast, in which they could distinguish houses, that appeared white and lofty at a distance. In the warmth of their admiration, they fancied these to be cities adorned with towers and pinnacles; and one of the soldiers happening to remark that this country in its appearance resembled Spain, Grijalva, with universal applause, called it New Spain. They first landed on the banks of a river which the natives called Tobasco; and next at a place, to the west of that river, in the province since known by the name of Guaxaca; where, in six days, the Spaniards, in exchange for European toys of small price, obtained ornaments of gold, of curious workmanship, to the value of fifteen-thousand pesos.\*

The two prisoners brought by Cordova from Yucatan, had hitherto served as interpreters; but, as they did not understand the language of this country, the Spaniards learned

\* A peso was equal to about five shillings sterling.

from the natives, by signs, that they were subjects of a great monarch, called Montezuma, whose dominion extended over that and many other provinces.

Continuing his course towards the west, he landed on a small island, which he named the Isle of Sacrifices, and touched at another small island, which he called St. Juan de Ulua. From this place, he despatched Pedro de Alvarado, one of his officers, to Velasquez, with an account of his important discoveries, and the treasure which he had acquired by traffic; and, after his departure, he proceeded along the coast, as far as the river Panuco, the country still appearing to be well peopled, fertile, and opulent.

Several of Grijalva's officers contended that it was not enough to have discovered those delightful regions, or to have performed the empty ceremony of taking possession of them for the crown of Castile, and that their glory was incomplete, unless they planted a colony in some proper station, which might enable them gradually to subject the whole to the dominion of their sovereign. But, though possessed both of ambition and courage, Grijalva was destitute of the superior talents capable either of forming or of executing so great a plan. He judged it more prudent to return to Cuba, having fulfilled the purpose of his voyage, and accomplished all that the armament which he commanded enabled him to perform. He returned to St. Jago on the 26th of October, after an absence of about six months.

This was the longest, as well as the most successful voyage hitherto made by the Spaniards in the new world. Transported by his good fortune, so far beyond his most sanguine expectations, Velasquez immediately despatched a person to carry this important intelligence to Spain, to exhibit the rich productions of the countries which had been discovered by his means, and to solicit so great an increase of authority, as might enable and encourage him to attempt their conquest. Without waiting for the return of his messenger, or for the arrival of Grijalva, of whom he had become so jealous or distrustful, that he had resolved no longer to employ him, he began to prepare an armament so powerful as might prove equal to an enterprise of so much danger and importance.



## CHAPTER IX.

INTERESTING NARRATIVE OF THE SPANISH CAPTIVE.—DEATH OF MONTEZUMA.—CONQUEST OF MEXICO, BY CORTES.

1518. TWENTY-SIX years had elapsed, since Columbus conducted the people of Europe to the new world. During that period, the Spaniards had made great progress in exploring its various regions. They had visited all the islands scattered in different clusters through that part of the ocean which flows in between North and South America. They had sailed along the eastern coast of the continent, from the river De la Plata to the bottom of the Mexican Gulf, and had found that it stretched without interruption through this vast portion of the globe. They had discovered the great Southern Ocean, which opened new prospects in that quarter. They had acquired some knowledge of the coast of Florida, which led them to observe the continent as it stretched in an opposite direction; and, though they extended their discoveries no farther towards the north, other nations had visited those parts which they had neglected. The English had sailed along the coast of America, from Labrador to the confines of Florida; and the Portuguese, in quest of a shorter passage to the East Indies, had ventured into the northern seas, and viewed the same regions. Thus, its extent was known, almost from its northern extremity to thirty-five degrees south of the equator. The countries which stretch thence to the southern boundary of America, the great empire of Peru, and the interior state of the extensive dominions subject to the sovereigns of Mexico, were still undiscovered.

When Grijalva returned to Cuba, he found the armament destined to attempt the conquest of that rich country which he had discovered, almost complete. Not only ambition, but avarice had urged Velasquez to hasten his preparations; and, having such a prospect of gratifying both, he had advanced considerable sums, out of his private fortune, towards defraying the expense of the expedition.

The person to whom he intrusted the command, was Fernando Cortes. He was born at Medellin, a small town in Estramadura, in the year 1485, and descended from a family

of noble blood, but of very moderate fortune. Originally destined by his parents to the study of law, he was sent early to the university of Salamanca. But he was soon disgusted with an academic life, which did not suit his ardent and restless genius, and retired to Medellin, where he devoted himself entirely to active sports and martial exercises. At this period of life, he was so impetuous, so overbearing, and so dissipated, that his father was glad to comply with his inclination, and send him abroad as an adventurer in arms. When he landed at St. Domingo in the year 1504, his reception equalled his most sanguine hopes, and he was employed by the governor in several honourable and lucrative stations. These, however, did not satisfy his ambition; and, in 1511, he obtained permission to accompany Diego Velasquez in his expedition to Cuba. In this service, he distinguished himself so much, that, notwithstanding some violent contests with Velasquez, occasioned by trivial events, unworthy of remembrance, he was at length taken into favour, and received an ample concession of lands and of Indians, the recompense usually bestowed upon adventurers in the new world.

Receiving his commission with the warmest expressions of respect and gratitude to the governor, Cortes immediately erected his standard before his own house, appeared in a military dress, and assumed all the ensigns of his new dignity. His utmost influence and activity were exerted in persuading many of his friends to engage in the service, and in urging forward the preparations for the voyage. All his own funds, together with what money he could raise by mortgaging his lands and Indians, were expended, in purchasing military stores and provisions, or in supplying the wants of those officers who were unable to equip themselves in a manner suited to their rank. He urged forward his preparations with so great rapidity, that he sailed from St. Jago de Cuba on the 18th of November; Velasquez accompanying him to the shore, and taking leave of him with an appearance of perfect friendship and confidence, though he had secretly given it in charge to some of Cortes's officers, to keep a watchful eye on every part of their commander's conduct.

Cortes proceeded to Trinidad, a small settlement on the same side of the island, where he was joined by several adventurers, and received a supply of provisions and military stores, of which his stock was still very incomplete. He had hardly left St. Jago, when the jealousy which had been work-

ing in the breast of Velasquez, grew so violent that it was impossible to suppress it. The armament was no longer under his own eye and direction; and he felt, that as his own power over it ceased, that of Cortes would become more absolute. Imagination now aggravated every circumstance, which had formerly excited suspicion: the rivals of Cortes industriously threw in reflections which increased his fears; and, with no less art than malice, they called superstition to their aid, employing the predictions of an astrologer, in order to complete the alarm. All these, by their united operation, produced the desired effect. Velasquez repented bitterly of his own imprudence, in having committed a trust of so much importance to a person whose fidelity appeared so doubtful, and hastily despatched instructions to Trinidad, empowering Verdugo, the chief magistrate there, to deprive Cortes of his commission. But Cortes had already made such progress in gaining the esteem and confidence of his troops, that, finding officers as well as soldiers equally zealous to support his authority, he soothed or intimidated Verdugo, and was permitted to depart from Trinidad without molestation.

From Trinidad, Cortes sailed for the Havanna, in order to raise more soldiers, and to complete the victualling of his fleet. There, several persons of distinction entered into the service, and engaged to supply what provisions were still wanting. Every thing was now ready for his departure; but, though this expedition was fitted out by the united effort of the Spanish power in Cuba; though every settlement had contributed its quota of men and provisions; though the governor had laid out considerable sums, and each adventurer had exhausted his stock, or strained his credit, the poverty of the preparations was such as must astonish the present age, and bore, indeed, no resemblance to an armament destined for the conquest of a great empire. The fleet consisted of eleven vessels; the largest of a hundred tons, which was dignified by the name of admiral; three of seventy or eighty tons, and the rest small open barks. On board these, were six-hundred-and-seventeen men: of whom, five-hundred-and-eight belonged to the land-service, and a hundred-and-nine were seamen or artificers. The soldiers were divided into eleven companies, according to the number of the ships; to each of which, Cortes appointed a captain, committing to him the command of the vessel while at sea, and of the men when on shore. As the use of fire-arms amongst the nations of



Europe, was, in that age, confined to a few battalions of regularly disciplined infantry, only thirteen soldiers were armed with muskets, thirty-two were cross-bow men, and the rest had swords and spears. Instead of the usual defensive armour, which must have been cumbrous in a hot climate, the soldiers wore jackets quilted with cotton, which experience had taught the Spaniards to be a sufficient protection against the weapons of the Americans. They had only sixteen horses, ten small field pieces, and four falconets.

*Feb. 10,* With this slender and ill-provided train, did  
1519. Cortes set sail, to make war upon a monarch whose

dominions were more extensive than all the kingdoms subject to the Spanish crown. As religious enthusiasm always mingled with the spirit of adventure in the new world, and, by a combination still more strange, united with avarice, in prompting the Spaniards to all their enterprises, a large cross was displayed in their standards, with this inscription, "Let us follow the cross, for under this sign we shall conquer."

As Cortes had determined to touch at every place visited by Grijalva, he steered directly towards the island of Cozumel. Here, having mustered his little army, he addressed them in the following manner:

"When I consider, my friends and companions, the good fortune that has brought us together in this island, the obstacles that we have surmounted, the persecutions over which we have triumphed, and the difficulties which have opposed our enterprise, I acknowledge the hand of God in the work we have undertaken, and promise myself success from beginnings so remarkably favoured by his divine providence, in our zeal for the service of God and our king; the same that has animated us to undertake the conquest of these unknown regions;—and the Almighty, in fighting our cause, will fight his own. I have no design to lessen the danger of the undertaking. We are to expect bloody engagements, incredible fatigues, and such multitudes of enemies, that it will require all your valour to sustain their attacks; at the same time, that want of necessaries, inclemencies of weather, and difficult marches, will exercise your constancy, which is accounted a second-rate valour, and shows as much greatness of spirit as the first; for, very often, in war, an object is accomplished by patience, which could not be effected by force. By this, Hercules gained the name of Invincible, and his exploits were called Labours. Antiquity has painted the Temple of Fame,



on the highest part of the mountain, and her image on the highest part of the temple; thereby, causing us to understand, that, in order to find her, after we have gained the top of the mountain, we must look higher still. We are but few in number; but union adds strength to armies, and serves to multiply them. In our agreement, consists our greatest strength. We must, my friends, be all of one mind to resolve, and as one hand to execute. Our interests should be the same, and the glory of conquest ought to be equally shared amongst us. The valour of every one in particular, must establish the security of all in general. I am your commander, and will be the first to hazard my life for the humblest of my soldiers. I shall lead you on, by example, to the execution of my orders; assuring you, that I find in myself a spirit sufficient to undertake the conquest of a whole world: and this hope is cherished by an extraordinary and indefinable impulse, the most promising of all presages. To conclude,—let our words be succeeded by actions; and let not my confidence be thought temerity, since it is so well supported by you, from whom I expect every thing that is wanting in myself."

At a short distance from the coast, stood the temple of the idol, so much revered by these Indians. It was a square building of stone, and of no contemptible architecture. The idol bore the figure of a man, but of a very terrible aspect. "All the idols, worshiped by these miserable people," observes an eminent Spanish historian,\* "were formed in the same manner: though they differed in the make and representation, they were all alike most abominably ugly; whether it was that these barbarians had no notion of any other model, or that the devil really appeared to them in such a shape; so that he who struck out the most hideous figure, was accounted the best workman."

The Spaniards found a great concourse of Indians at the temple; and in the midst of them a priest, distinguished from the rest by a certain ornament, or scanty covering, not sufficient for the purpose of decency, to a European eye. "He seemed to preach, and to persuade them to something, by a tone and gesture extremely ridiculous; for he gave himself the airs of a preacher, with all the gravity and au-

\* De Solis.

thority which a man dressed in so inappropriate a manner, could assume."

The visit of Cortes to the island of Cozumel, was the means of redeeming a Spaniard, who had been for many years a prisoner amongst the Indians. One of the natives was heard repeating, in an imperfect manner, the name of *Castilla*, and Cortes, whom nothing could ever divert from pursuing his main point, observed the word, and commanded the interpreter to inquire into its meaning. The Indians said that the Spaniards very much resembled certain prisoners who were in Yucatan, natives of a country called *Castilla*. This, Cortes no sooner heard, than he resolved to set them at liberty, and engage them in his service. On making more particular inquiry, he found that they were in the power of some Indians of the highest rank, residing two days farther within the province of Yucatan. He consulted with the cazique of Cozumel, and arranged with him the manner of their ransom. He immediately ordered Diego de Ordaz to sail to the coast of Yucatan, by the shortest route, which was about four leagues over: there, he was to land the Indians appointed by the cazique for this purpose, who carried a letter from Cortes to the prisoners, and some trifles for their ransom; and Ordaz was directed to wait eight days, in which time the Indians undertook to return with an answer.

The eight days, however, elapsed, and Ordaz returned to the island, without bringing any intelligence, either of the captives, or the Indians who had been sent in quest of them. Cortes was highly displeased; but, supposing that the latter had deceived him by false intelligence, in order to convert to their own use the presents sent by him for their ransom, he was unwilling any longer to delay his voyage, or to impart his suspicions to the cazique. He was just on the point of embarking, when there was discovered, at a distance, a canoe, crossing the gulf of Yucatan, and steering directly for the island. She was filled with armed Indians, who used surprising diligence in their approach, without showing any fear of the Spanish fleet. Informed of this, Cortes directed Andres de Tapia to place himself in ambush near the place where the canoe was to land the Indians, and to discover their designs. De Tapia took his post accordingly, where he could not be seen: but, finding that they came on shore with their bows and arrows, he suffered them to pass him a little

way from the coast, and then cut off their retreat. When the Indians discovered him, they fled; but one person amongst them stopped, and, advancing a few paces, exclaimed, with a loud voice, in the Castilian tongue, that he was a Christian. De Tapia received him with open arms, and, full of joy for his good fortune, conducted him to the general, followed by the Indians, who appeared to be the messengers left by Diego de Ordaz, on the coast of Yucatan. The stranger was almost naked. On one shoulder, he carried a bow and quiver; over the other, was thrown a mantle, like a cloak, in one corner of which was tied the "office of the church," which he immediately showed to the Spaniards, ascribing to his devotions the good fortune of seeing himself again amongst christians. He made his compliments very awkwardly, being under the influence, rather of his newly acquired, than of his native manners, and could not deliver what he had to say, without intermixing with his Spanish, some words that were not understood. Cortes received him with the warmest and most joyful caresses; and, covering him with his own cloak, ordered that he should be clothed and refreshed.

This man was called Jerome de Aguilar, and was a native of Ecija, where he had received deacon's orders; and, according to the account afterwards given by him of his adventures, he had been nearly eight years a captive amongst the Indians.—"I was shipwrecked," said he, "in a caravel, upon the flats of the Alacranes, when passing from Darien to the island of St. Domingo; and, escaping in the boat, with twenty more in company, was driven upon the shore of Yucatan. We were taken, and thence carried to a country of Caribbee Indians, whose cazique immediately selected the best fed amongst us, to offer to his idols, intending afterwards to feast upon the remains of the cruel sacrifice. One of those who were reserved for a future occasion, by reason of our leanness, was myself. They treated me with great rigour, but, at the same time, inhumanly feasted me, that I might be in a better condition to furnish a second banquet. I contrived to escape from a wooden cage, in which I was confined; not so much with a hope to save my life, as a desire to seek another kind of death; and, wandering for several days at a distance from every habitation, without any other nourishment than the wild herbs of the field, I fell into the hands of certain Indians, who presented me to their cazique,—an enemy to him from whom I had escaped. This master used me with more



humanity, either that he might exhibit a contrast to the other, or perhaps because he had a real aversion to his cruelties. I served him for several years, running through different fortunes in this new slavery, for at first he compelled me to work beyond my strength: but he afterwards treated me better, being seemingly pleased with my obedience, and especially with my modesty—for there is no temper so barbarous, as to be wholly void of the regard due to virtue. Accordingly, the cazique gave me an employment near his person, and in a short time I acquired his esteem and confidence.

“This cazique dying, recommended me to his son, under whom I held the same employment, and found a favourable occasion to increase my credit. The neighbouring caziques having made war against him, I gained several victories over them, by my military skill, and thereupon became so great a favourite, both of the prince and the people, and enjoyed so much authority when I received the letter from Cortes, that I could without difficulty treat for my liberty, as the recompence of my services, and offer, as my own gift, the presents sent as my ransom.”

Thus, did Aguilar relate his adventures; adding, besides, that, of the rest of the Spanish captives, there remained alive only one sailor, called Gonzalo Guerrero; and that he had communicated to him the letter of Cortes, and endeavoured to bring him with him, but without effect. He had married a rich Indian, by whom he had three or four children, and very justly excused his stay by his natural affection for his offspring, and his love for a virtuous wife.

The ransom of Aguilar was an event alike fortunate for himself, and advantageous to Cortes. He was perfectly acquainted with a dialect of the Indian language, understood through a large extent of country, and, possessing besides a considerable share of prudence and sagacity, proved highly useful as an interpreter.

From Cozumel, Cortes proceeded to the river of Tabasco, in hopes of a reception as friendly as Grijalva had experienced there, and of finding gold in the same abundance; but the disposition of the natives, from some unknown cause, was totally changed. After repeated endeavours to conciliate their good will, he was constrained to have recourse to violence. Though the forces of the enemy were numerous, and advanced with extraordinary courage, they were routed with great slaughter, in several successive actions. The loss which



they sustained, and still more the astonishment and terror excited by the destructive effect of the fire-arms, and the dreadful appearance of the horses, humbled their fierce spirits, and induced them to sue for peace. They acknowledged the king of Castile as their sovereign, and granted Cortes a supply of provisions, with a present of cotton garments, some gold, and twenty female slaves. In those different conflicts, the Spaniards lost only two men, but they had a considerable number wounded. Though there is no occasion to have recourse to any supernatural cause, to account either for the greatness of their victories, or the smallness of their loss, yet the Spanish historians fail not to ascribe both to the patronage of St. Jago, the tutelar saint of their country; who, as they relate, fought at the head of the Spaniards, and, by his prowess, gave a turn to the fate of the battle.

It may not be uninteresting to describe here the warlike weapons of the Indians, their manner of marching and engaging, which may serve on all occasions in this conquest, the art of war being nearly the same amongst all the nations of New Spain. Most of their weapons were bows and arrows: the bow-strings were made of the sinews of beasts, or of thongs of deer-skin, twisted; their arrows, for want of iron, were headed with bones ground sharp. They also used a kind of darts, which sometimes they threw, and at other times they managed like a pike. They had likewise long swords, which they managed with both hands, made of wood, in which they fixed sharp flints. The strongest of them had clubs, in which were inserted flints; and there were slingers, who threw stones with great force and skill. The defensive arms, which were used only by commanders and persons of distinction, were coats of quilted cotton, ill-fitted breast-plates, and shields of wood or tortoise-shell, adorned with plates of such metal as they could procure. For this purpose, some used gold, as we do iron. The rest were naked, and all were hideously painted with various colours; a martial sort of ornament, designed to strike terror into their enemies; as Cæsar relates of the Britains, and Tacitus of the Aarii, a people of Germany, the latter remarking that an impression on the eye is the first step to victory. Their heads were covered with plumes of feathers, like crowns, raised on high, to make them look taller. They had also warlike instruments of music, with which they animated their soldiers, and made signals; as flutes made of large canes · sea-shells; and

a sort of drums, made of the trunk of a tree.—They formed their battalions of great numbers, without any order; but had troops of reserve, to relieve where there was occasion. They attacked with great fury, and terrible outcries, with which they thought to intimidate their enemies; a custom which some have accounted amongst the brutalities of those Indians, without observing that it has been used by many ancient nations, and not despised even by the Romans. Cæsar, in his Commentaries, commends the cries of his own soldiers, and blames the silence of those of Pompey; and Cato the elder was accustomed to say, that he had gained more victories by the cries of the soldiers, than by their swords; both of them being of opinion that the cries proceeded from the courage that was in their heart.—The Indians were divided into companies, whose captains led, but could scarcely govern their men; for, when they entered into battle, they were directed either by fear or rage, as is usual amongst such multitudes, being equally eager to attack and to run away.

Cortes continued his course to the westward, keeping as near the shore as possible, in order to observe the country; but could discover no place for landing, until he arrived at St. Juan de Ulua. As he entered this harbour, a large canoe, full of people, amongst whom were two who seemed to be persons of distinction, approached his ship, with signs of peace and amity. They came on board without fear or distrust, and addressed him in a most respectful manner, but in a language altogether unknown to Aguilar. Cortes was in the utmost perplexity and distress, at an event of which he instantly foresaw the consequences; and already felt the hesitation and uncertainty with which he should carry on the great schemes which he meditated, if, in his transactions with the natives, he must depend entirely upon so imperfect, ambiguous, and conjectural a mode of communication, as the use of signs. But he did not remain long in his embarrassing situation: a fortunate accident extricated him, when his own sagacity could have contributed little towards his relief. One of the female slaves, whom he had received from the cazique of Tabasco, happened to be present at the first interview between Cortes and his new guests. She perceived his distress, as well as the confusion of Aguilar; and, as she perfectly understood the Mexican language, she explained what they had said in the Yucatan tongue, with which Aguilar was acquainted. This woman, known afterwards by the

name of Marina, and who makes a conspicuous figure in the history of the new world, where great revolutions were brought about by small causes and inconsiderable instruments, was born in one of the provinces of the Mexican empire. Having been sold as a slave in the early part of her life, after a variety of adventures she fell into the hands of the Tabascans, and had resided long enough amongst them to acquire their language, without losing the use of her own. Though it was both tedious and troublesome to converse by the intervention of two different interpreters, Cortes was so highly pleased with having discovered this method of carrying on some intercourse with the people of a country into which he was determined to penetrate, that in the transports of his joy he considered it as a visible interposition of Providence in his favour.

He now learned, that the two persons whom he had received on board his ship, were deputies from Teutile and Pilpatoe, two officers entrusted with the government of that province, by a great monarch, whom they called Montezuma; and that they were sent to inquire what his intentions were in visiting their coast, and to offer him what assistance he might need, in order to continue his voyage. Cortes, struck with the appearance of those people, as well as the tenor of the message, assured them, in respectful terms, that he approached their country with most friendly sentiments, and came to propose matters of great importance to the welfare of their prince and his kingdom, which he would unfold more fully, in person, to the governor and the general. Next morning, without waiting for any answer, he landed his troops, his horses, and artillery; and having chosen proper ground, began to erect huts for his men, and to fortify his camp.

Next day, Teutile and Pilpatoe entered the Spanish camp with a numerous retinue, and Cortes, considering them as the ministers of a great monarch, entitled to a degree of attention very different from that which the Spaniards were accustomed to pay to the petty caziques, with whom they had intercourse in the isles, received them with much formal ceremony. He informed them, that he came as ambassador from Don Carlos of Austria, king of Castile, the greatest monarch of the East, and was intrusted with propositions of such moment, that he could impart them to none but the emperor Montezuma himself, and therefore required them to conduct



him, without loss of time, into the presence of their master. The Mexican officers could not conceal their uneasiness at a request, which they knew would be disagreeable, and which they foresaw might prove extremely embarrassing to their sovereign, whose mind had been filled with many disquieting apprehensions, ever since the former appearance of the Spaniards on his coasts. But, before they attempted to dissuade Cortes from insisting on this demand, they endeavoured to conciliate his good will, by entreating him to accept of certain presents, which, as humble slaves of Montezuma, they laid at his feet. They were introduced with great parade, and consisted of fine cotton cloth, plumes of various colours, and ornaments of gold and silver, to a considerable value; the workmanship of which appeared to be as curious, as the materials were rich. The display of these produced an effect very different from what the Mexicans intended. Instead of satisfying, it increased the avidity of the Spaniards, and rendered them so eager and impatient to become masters of a country which abounded with so precious productions, that Cortes could hardly listen with patience to the arguments which Pilpatoe and Teutile employed to dissuade him from visiting the capital; and, in a haughty determined tone he insisted on his demand, of being admitted to a personal audience of their sovereign. During this interview, some painters, in the train of the Mexican chiefs, had been diligently employed in delineating, upon white cotton cloths, figures of the ships, the horses, the artillery, the soldiers, and whatever else attracted their eyes, as singular. When Cortes observed this, and was informed that these pictures were to be sent to Montezuma, in order to convey to him a more lively idea of the strange and wonderful objects now presented to their view, than any words could communicate, he resolved to render the representation still more animated and interesting, by exhibiting such a spectacle as might give both them and their monarch an awful impression of the extraordinary prowess of his followers, and the irresistible force of their arms. The trumpets, by his order, sounded an alarm; the troops, in a moment, formed in order of battle, the infantry performed such martial exercises as were best suited to display the effect of their different weapons; the horse, in various evolutions, gave a specimen of their agility and strength; the artillery, pointed towards the thick woods which surrounded the camp, were fired, and made dreadful



havoc amongst the trees. The Mexicans looked on with that silent amazement which is natural when the mind is struck with objects, which are both awful and above its comprehension. But, at the explosion of the cannon, many of them fled, some fell to the ground, and all were so much confounded at the sight of men whose power so nearly resembled that of the gods, that Cortes found it difficult to compose and reassure them.

Messengers were immediately despatched to Montezuma, with those pictures, and a full account of every thing that had passed since the arrival of the Spaniards; and by them Cortes sent a present of some European curiosities to Montezuma, which, though of no great value, he believed would be acceptable on account of their novelty.

The Mexican monarchs, in order to obtain early information of every occurrence in all parts of their extensive empire, had introduced a refinement in police, unknown at that time, in Europe. They had couriers posted at proper stations, along the principal roads; and, as these were trained to agility by regular practice, and relieved one another at moderate distances, they conveyed intelligence with surprising rapidity. Though the capital in which Montezuma resided, was above a-hundred-and-eighty miles from St. Juan de Ulua, the presents of Cortes were carried thither, and an answer to his demands was received, in seven days. The same officers who had hitherto treated with the Spaniards, were employed to deliver his answer; but, as they knew how repugnant the determination of their master was to all the schemes and wishes of the Spanish commander, they would not venture to make it known, until they had previously endeavoured to soothe and conciliate him. For this purpose, they renewed their negotiation, by introducing a train of a hundred Indians, loaded with presents sent to him by Montezuma. The magnificence of these was such as became a great monarch, and far exceeded any idea hitherto formed by the Spaniards, of his wealth. They were placed on mats spread on the ground, in such order, as showed them to the greatest advantage. Cortes and his officers viewed, with admiration, the various manufactures of the country; cotton stuffs, so fine, and of so delicate a texture, as to resemble silk; pictures of animals, trees, and other natural objects, formed with feathers of different colours, disposed and mingled with such skill and elegance, as to rival the works of

the pencil, in truth and beauty of imitation. But what chiefly attracted their eyes, were two large plates of a circular form; one of massive gold, representing the sun, the other of silver, an emblem of the moon. The value of the latter plate, alone, is said to have been more than twenty-thousand dollars. These were accompanied with bracelets, collars, rings, and other trinkets of gold; and, that nothing might be wanting which could give the Spaniards a complete idea of what the country afforded, with some boxes filled with pearls, precious stones, and grains of gold unwrought, as they had been found in the mines or rivers. Cortes received all these with an appearance of profound veneration for the monarch by whom they were bestowed. But when the Mexicans, presuming upon this, informed him, that their master, though he desired him to accept of what he had sent, as a token of regard for that monarch whom Cortes represented, would not give his consent that foreign troops should approach nearer to his capital, or even allow them to continue longer in his dominions, the Spanish general declared, in a manner more resolute and peremptory than formerly, that he must insist on his first demand, as he could not, without dishonour, return to his own country, until he was admitted into the presence of the prince whom he was appointed to visit in the name of his sovereign. The Mexicans, astonished at seeing any man dare to oppose that will, which they were accustomed to consider as supreme and irresistible; yet afraid of precipitating their country into an open rupture with so formidable enemies; prevailed with Cortes to promise, that he would not move from his present camp, until the return of a messenger, whom they sent to Montezuma for further instructions.

The firmness with which Cortes adhered to his original proposal, should naturally have brought the negotiation between him and Montezuma to a speedy issue, as it seemed to leave the Mexican monarch no choice, but either to receive him with confidence as a friend, or to oppose him openly as an enemy. The latter was what might have been expected, from a haughty prince in possession of extensive power. The Mexican empire, at this period, was at a pitch of grandeur, to which no other society had ever attained in so short a period. Though it had subsisted, according to their own traditions, only a-hundred-and-thirty-years, its dominion extended from the Atlantic to the Pacific ocean, over territories stretching, with some small interruption, above five-

hundred leagues from east to west, and more than two-hundred from north to south, comprehending provinces not inferior, in fertility, population, and opulence, to any in the torrid zone.

Of all the princes who had swayed the Mexican sceptre, Montezuma was the most haughty, the most violent, and the most impatient of control. His subjects looked up to him with awe, and his enemies with terror. The former, he governed with unexampled rigour, but they were impressed with such an opinion of his capacity, as commanded their respect; and by many victories over the latter, he had spread far the dread of his arms, and had added several considerable provinces to his dominions.

Montezuma was the eleventh king, according to their painted annals, and the second of that name, that had sat on the throne of the Mexican empire. He was of the royal blood, and in his youth devoted himself to war, in which he gained the reputation of a valiant captain. He returned to court, in no small degree inflated by the flatteries of fame; and, finding himself applauded and respected as the first man of his nation, he entertained hopes of grasping the sceptre at the next election.

As the first step to that elevation, he laboured industriously to gain friends. He affected great veneration for his king, extraordinary modesty and composure in all his actions, and tempered the severity of his manners, with liberality in the distribution of favours. He also gained the character of being very zealous in attention to his religion; a powerful motive to captivate those who are imposed upon by outward show. To this end, he erected a little separate altar, in the most frequented temple, in the form of a tribune; to which, he retired in the view of all the people; staying there many hours to attend to that popular devotion, or the placing of the idol of his ambition amongst his other gods. By these hypocritical arts, he gained so much reputation, that when the king, his predecessor, died, he received the unanimous vote of the electors, and was hailed with loud acclamations by the people. Like many aspiring politicians, in what is called the civilized world, he suffered himself to be courted to accept what he had desired, and seemed to yield to the popular wishes with reluctance: but, no sooner was he possessed of the imperial throne, than all that artifice, with which he had disguised his natural disposition, ceased, and he discovered



those vices which he had hitherto covered with the show of virtues.

He had reigned fourteen years, when Cortes arrived in Mexico. During this period, many provinces had rebelled against his authority; but none of his subjects continued to resist his power, except the people of Mechoacan, Tlascala, and Tepeaca; and he was accustomed to say that he did not subdue them, because he wanted those enemies to supply him with captives for the sacrifices of his gods.

From the moment that the Spaniards appeared on his coast, he discovered symptoms of timidity and embarrassment. Instead of taking such resolutions, as the consciousness of his own power, or the memory of his former exploits might have inspired, he deliberated with an anxiety and hesitation, which did not escape the notice of his meanest courtiers.

The perplexity and discomfiture of Montezuma's mind, on this occasion, were not owing wholly to the impression which the Spaniards had made by the novelty of their appearance and the terror of their arms. Its origin may be traced to a more remote source. There was an opinion, if we believe the earliest and most authentic Spanish historians, almost universal amongst the Indian nations, that some dreadful calamity was impending over their heads, from a race of formidable invaders, who should come from regions towards the rising sun, to over-run and desolate their country. Whether this disquieting apprehension flowed from the memory of some natural calamity which had afflicted that part of the globe, and impressed the minds of the inhabitants with superstitious fears and forebodings; or whether it was an imagination, accidentally suggested by the astonishment arising from the first sight of a new race of men, it is impossible to determine: but, as the Mexicans were more superstitious than any other people in the new world, they were more deeply affected by the appearance of the Spaniards, whom their credulity instantly represented as the instrument destined to produce the fatal revolution which they dreaded. Under these circumstances, it ceases to be incredible, that a handful of adventurers, should alarm the monarch of a great empire, and all his subjects.

It may afford some amusement to our readers, to narrate, in the simple language of an ancient Spanish historian, "those presages, and horrible and wonderful portents, which," it was at that time, believed, "God either ordered, ordained,



or permitted, to crush the spirits of those fierce people, and render the conquest less difficult to the Spaniards; Providence, by degrees, disposing all things towards it, by such unlikely means."—Those "horrible portents" bear a strong resemblance to the stories related by the celebrated Cotton Mather, of New England; and it is not improbable, that the superstitious pages of De Solis have furnished materials, out of which were afterwards fabricated the terrible operations of the Salem Witches.

"As soon as they had notice," relates De Solis, "of the Spaniards being in Mexico, when Juan de Grijalva arrived upon their coast the year before, several prodigies began to appear in this country, and very astonishing signs, which did in a manner assure Montezuma that the ruin of his empire drew near, and greatly terrified and discouraged both him and his subjects.

"A frightful comet appeared many nights, in shape like a pyramid, which, beginning at midnight, advanced slowly to the highest parts of the heavens, where it vanished at the presence of the sun. Afterwards, at mid-day, another comet or exhalation, was seen to rise in the west, like a fiery serpent, with three heads, which ran swiftly, till it vanished in the east, scattering an infinite number of sparks, which died in the air.—The great lake of Mexico overflowed its banks, and, with an extraordinary impetuosity, drowned the country, carrying away several houses, with a sort of waves that looked as if it had boiled up; though there were no floods or stormy weather, to which they could attribute the motion of the waters.—One of their temples took fire of itself, without their being able to discover the cause of its burning, or the means to extinguish the flame. The very stones were seen to burn, and the whole pile was reduced to little more than ashes.—Lamentable voices were heard in the air, which foretold the end of that monarchy, and the same was repeated in the answers of their idols; the devil pronouncing by them what he could conjecture of those natural causes which were in motion, or as much as he was permitted to know by the God of nature, who sometimes torments him by making him the instrument of truth.—Several monsters, of horrible deformity, and never seen before, were brought to the king; which, in his opinion, had a meaning, and denoted great misfortunes. If they were called monsters from demonstrating, or foreshowing things to come, as was believed by the

ancients, who gave them that name, it was not strange that they should be held for presages, amongst those barbarous people, whose ignorance and superstition went hand-in-hand."

"Histories mention two very remarkable accidents, which extremely troubled the mind of Montezuma; nor is it proper to omit them, since they found credit with Father Joseph de Acosta, Juan Botero, and other writers of judgment and authority:—

"Certain fishermen near the lake of Mexico, caught a monstrous fowl, of extraordinary make and greatness, and, accounting it a novelty, presented the same to the king. Its deformity was horrible, and on its head was a shining plate, like a looking-glass, from which the sun reflected a sort of dim and melancholy light. Montezuma observed it, and drawing near to take a better view, saw within it a representation of the night, amidst whose obscurity were seen some parts of the heaven covered with stars, and so distinctly represented, that he turned his eyes to the sun, as one doubtful of the day; and, on fixing his eyes a second time upon that seeming glass, he spied, instead of night, what gave him greater astonishment; for there appeared to his sight an army of men that came from the east, making a terrible slaughter of his subjects. He assembled the magicians and the priests, to consult about this prodigy, and the bird stood immovable, till many of them had tried the same experiment; but then it flew away, and vanished in their presence, leaving them another presage in its astonishing flight.

"A few days afterwards, a countryman came to the palace, a person reputed to be a plain downright man, who earnestly, and with mysterious instances, pressed to have an audience of the king. After several consultations, he was introduced to his presence; and, having made his obeisance, without any manner of disturbance or fear, he spoke to him in his rustic idiom, but with a kind of freedom and eloquence, which denoted a more than natural transport, or that the words were not his own, but were inspired, saying: 'Yesterday, in the evening, Sir, being on my farm, employed in the improvement of my land, I saw an eagle, of extraordinary magnitude, which stooped down furiously upon me, and catching me between his claws, carried me a great way through the air, till he set me down near a spacious cave, in which was a man in royal robes, sleeping amongst a diversity of flowers and perfumes, with a scented composition burning

in his hand. I drew somewhat nearer, and saw your likeness, or perhaps it was yourself; for I cannot affirm it, though, in my opinion, I had my senses free. I was going to withdraw, being afraid and full of awe; but an imperious voice stopped and frightened me anew, commanding me to take the burning perfume out of your hand, and apply it to some part of your leg that was uncovered. I refused, as much as I could, to commit such a piece of wickedness: but the same voice, in a terrible tone, forced me to obey; upon which, Sir, being unable to resist, and emboldened by fear, I applied the burning composition to your thigh, and you endured the burning without waking, or making any motion. I should have thought that you were dead, but that your quiet breathing showed you to be alive, the repose expressing what was wanting in the senses. Then, the same voice—which seemed to be formed in the air—said to me: ‘Thus, sleeps thy king, given up to his delights and vanities, when he has the anger of his gods upon him, and so many enemies, who come from the other part of the world, to destroy his monarchy and religion. Bid him awake, and prevent, if he can, the miseries and calamities that threaten him!’—Scarcely had he pronounced these words, which I bear deeply imprinted on my memory, when the eagle took me up in his talons, and set me down on my farm, without the least hurt.—Thus, do I perform what the gods have enjoined me. Awake! Sir, for your pride and your cruelty have provoked them! I say, again, awake! or take care how you sleep, since the burning sting of your conscience does not rouse you; nor can you be now ignorant, that the cries of your people have reached Heaven, before they came to your ears!”

Notwithstanding the influence of the impression made upon Montezuma’s mind, by his superstitious fears, he did not yield implicit obedience to the spell by which he seemed enchained by fate. When his messenger arrived from the Spanish camp, with an account that the leader of the strangers, adhering to his original demand, refused to obey the order enjoining him to leave the country, he assumed some degree of resolution, and, in a transport of rage, threatened to sacrifice those presumptuous men to his gods. But his doubts and fears quickly returned; and, instead of issuing orders to carry his threats into execution, he again called his ministers, to confer and offer their advice.

Feeble and temporising measures will always be the result,



when men assemble to deliberate, in a situation where they ought to act. The Mexican counsellors took no effectual measure to expel the troublesome intruders, and were satisfied with issuing a more positive injunction, requiring them to leave the country; but this, they preposterously accompanied with a present, so valuable as proved a fresh inducement to remain.

Meanwhile, the Spaniards were not without solicitude, or a variety of sentiments, in deliberating concerning their own future conduct. From what they had already seen, many of them formed so extravagant ideas concerning the opulence of the country, that, despising danger or hardships, when they had in view treasures which appeared to be inexhaustible, they were eager to attempt the conquest. Others, estimating the power of the Mexican empire by its wealth, and enumerating the various proofs, which had occurred of its being under a well regulated administration, contended, that it would be an act of the wildest frenzy to attack such a state with a small body of men, in want of provisions, unconnected with any ally, and already enfeebled by the diseases peculiar to the climate, and the loss of several of their number. Cortes secretly applauded the advocates for bold measures, and cherished their romantic hopes, as such ideas corresponded with his own, and favoured the execution of his schemes. From the time that the suspicions of Velasquez had broken out with open violence, in the attempts to deprive him of the command, Cortes saw the necessity of dissolving a connexion which would obstruct and embarrass all his operations, and watched for a proper opportunity of coming to a final rupture. Having this in view, he had laboured by every art to secure the esteem and affection of his soldiers. With his abilities for command, it was easy to gain their esteem; and his followers were quickly satisfied that they might rely, with perfect confidence, on the conduct and courage of their leader.

During those intrigues, Teutile arrived with the present from Montezuma, and, at the same time, delivered the ultimate order of that monarch, to depart instantly out of his dominions; and when Cortes, instead of complying, renewed his request of an audience, the Mexican turned from him abruptly, and quitted the camp, with looks and gestures which strongly expressed his surprise and resentment. Next morning, none of the natives, who used to frequent the camp in great numbers, in order to barter with the soldiers, and to



bring in provisions, appeared. All friendly correspondence seemed now to be at an end, and it was expected every moment that hostilities would commence. This, though an event that might have been foreseen, occasioned a sudden consternation amongst the Spaniards, which emboldened the adherents of Velasquez, not only to murmur and cabal against their general, but to appoint one of their number to remonstrate openly against his imprudence, in attempting the conquest of a mighty empire with so inadequate a force, and to urge the necessity of returning to Cuba, in order to refit the fleet and augment the army. Diego de Ordaz, one of his principal officers, whom the malcontents charged with this commission, delivered it with a soldierly freedom and bluntness, assuring Cortes that he spoke the sentiments of the whole army. He listened to this remonstrance without any appearance of emotion; and, as he well knew the temper and wishes of his soldiers, and foresaw how they would receive a proposition, fatal at once to all the splendid hopes and schemes which they had been forming with such complacency, he carried his dissimulation so far, as to seem to relinquish his own measures in compliance with the request of Ordaz, and issued orders that the army should be in readiness the next day to re-embark for Cuba. As soon as this was known, the disappointed adventurers exclaimed and threatened; the emissaries of Cortes, mingling with them, inflamed their rage; the ferment became general; the whole camp was nearly in open mutiny, all demanding with eagerness to see their commander. Cortes was not slow in appearing; when, with one voice, officers and soldiers expressed their astonishment and indignation at the orders which they had received. It was unworthy, they cried, of the Castilian courage, to be daunted at the first aspect of danger, and infamous to fly before any enemy appeared. For their parts, they were determined not to relinquish an enterprise, that had hitherto been successful, and which tended so visibly to spread the knowledge of true religion, and to advance the glory and interest of their country. Happy under his command, they would follow him with alacrity through every danger, in quest of those settlements and treasures which he had so long held out to their view; but, if he chose rather to return to Cuba, and tamely give up all his hopes of distinction and opulence to an envious rival, they would instantly choose another general, to conduct them in that path of glory, which he had not spirit to enter.

Delighted with their ardour, Cortès was not offended at the boldness with which it was uttered. The sentiments were what he himself had inspired, and the warmth of expression satisfied him that his followers had thoroughly imbibed them. He affected, however, to be surprised at what he heard, declaring that his orders to prepare for embarking were issued from a persuasion that this was agreeable to his troops ; that, from deference to what he had been informed was their inclination, he had sacrificed his own private opinion, which was firmly bent on establishing, immediately, a settlement on the sea-coast, and then on endeavouring to penetrate into the interior of the country ; that now he was convinced of his error ; and, as he perceived that they were animated with the generous spirit which breathed in every true Spaniard, he would resume, with fresh ardour, his original plan of operation, and doubted not to conduct them, in the career of victory, to fortunes as independent as were merited by their valour. Upon this declaration, shouts of applause testified the excess of their joy. The measure seemed to be taken with unanimous consent ; those who secretly condemned it being obliged to join in the acclamations, partly to conceal their disaffection from their general, and partly to avoid the imputation of cowardice from their fellow-soldiers.

Without allowing his men time to cool or to reflect, Cortes began to carry his design into execution. In order to give a beginning to a colony, he assembled the principal persons in his army, and by their suffrage elected a council and magistrates, in whom the government was to be vested. As men naturally transplant the institutions and forms of the mother country into their new settlements, this was framed upon the model of a Spanish corporation. The magistrates were distinguished by the same names and ensigns of office, and were to exercise a similar jurisdiction. All the persons chosen were most firmly devoted to Cortes, and the instrument of their election was framed in the king's name, without any mention of their dependence on Velasquez. The two principles, of avarice and enthusiasm, which prompted the Spaniards to all their enterprises in the new world, seem to have concurred in suggesting the name which Cortes bestowed upon his infant settlement. He called it, "Villa Rica de la Vera Cruz,"—"The rich town of the True Cross."

The first meeting of the new council was distinguished by a transaction of great moment. As soon as it assembled,

Cortes applied for leave to enter ; and, approaching with many marks of profound respect, which added dignity to the tribunal, and set an example of reverence for its authority, he began a long harangue, in which, with much art, and in terms extremely flattering to the persons just entering upon their new function, he observed, that as the supreme jurisdiction over the colony which they had planted, was now vested in this court, he considered them as clothed with the authority and representing the person of their sovereign ; accordingly, that he would communicate to them what he deemed essential to the public safety, with the same dutiful fidelity as if he were addressing his royal master ; that the security of a colony settled in a great empire, the sovereign of which had already discovered his hostile intentions, depended on arms, and the efficacy of these upon the subordination and discipline preserved among the troops ; that his right to command was derived from a commission granted by the governor of Cuba ; and, as that had been long since revoked, the lawfulness of his jurisdiction might well be questioned ; that he might be thought to act upon a defective, or even a dubious title ; nor could they trust an army which might dispute the powers of its general, at a juncture when it ought implicitly to obey his orders ; that, moved by these considerations, he now resigned all his authority to them, that they, having both right to choose, and power to confer full jurisdiction, might appoint one, in the king's name, to command the army in its future operations ; and, as for his own part, such was his zeal for the service in which they were engaged, that he would most cheerfully take up a pike with the same hand that laid down the general's truncheon, and convince his fellow-soldiers, that, though accustomed to command, he had not forgotten how to obey. Having finished his discourse, he laid the commission from Velasquez upon the table, and, after kissing his truncheon, delivered it to the chief magistrate, and withdrew.

The deliberations of the council were not long, as Cortes had concerted this important measure with his confidants, and had prepared the other members with great address, for the part which he wished them to take. His resignation was accepted ; and, as the uninterrupted tenor of their prosperity under his conduct afforded the most satisfying evidence of his abilities for command, by their unanimous suffrage, they elected him chief-justice of the colony, and captain-general



of its army, and appointed his commission to be made out in the king's name, with most ample powers, which were to continue in force until the royal pleasure should be farther known. That this deed might not be deemed the machination of a junto, the council called together the troops, and acquainted them with what had been resolved. The soldiers, with eager applause, ratified the choice made by the council; the air resounded with the name of Cortes, and all vowed to shed their blood in support of his authority.

Having now brought his intrigues to the desired issue, and shaken off his mortifying dependence on the governor of Cuba, Cortes accepted the commission, which vested in him supreme jurisdiction, civil as well as military, over the colony, with many professions of respect to the council, and gratitude to the army. Together with his new command, he assumed greater dignity, and began to exercise more extensive powers. Formerly, he had felt himself to be only the deputy of a subject; now, he acted as the representative of his sovereign. The adherents of Velasquez, fully aware of what would be the effect of this change in the situation of Cortes, could no longer continue silent and passive spectators of his actions. They exclaimed openly against the proceedings of the council, as illegal, and against those of the army as mutinous. Cortes, instantly perceiving the necessity of giving a timely check to this seditious discourse, by some vigorous measure, arrested Ordaz, Escudero, and Velasquez de Leon, the ringleaders of this faction, and sent them prisoners on board the fleet, loaded with chains. Their dependants, astonished and overawed, remained quiet; and Cortes, more desirous to reclaim than to punish his prisoners, who were officers of great merit, courted their friendship with such assiduity and address, that the reconciliation was perfectly cordial; and, on the most trying occasions, neither their connexion with the governor of Cuba, nor the memory of the indignity with which they had been treated, tempted them to swerve from an inviolable attachment to his interest. In this, as well as his other negotiations at this critical conjuncture, which decided with respect to his future fame and fortune, Cortes owed much of his success to the Mexican gold, which he distributed with a liberal hand, both amongst his friends and opponents.

Having thus rendered the union between himself and his army indissoluble, by engaging it to join him in disclaiming



any dependence on the governor of Cuba, and in repeated acts of disobedience to his authority, Cortes thought he might now venture to quit the camp in which he had hitherto remained, and advance into the country. To this, he was encouraged by an event no less fortunate than seasonable. Some Indians, having approached his camp in a mysterious manner, were introduced into his presence. He found that they were sent with an offer of friendship from the cazique of Zempoala, a considerable town at no great distance ; and that, though subject to the Mexican empire, he was impatient of the yoke, and filled with such dread and hatred of Montezuma, that nothing could be more acceptable to him than any prospect of deliverance from the oppression under which he groaned. On hearing this, a ray of light and hope broke in upon the mind of Cortes. He saw that the great empire, which he intended to attack, was neither perfectly united, nor its sovereign universally beloved. He concluded, that the causes of disaffection could not be confined to one province, but that in other corners there must be malcontents, so weary of subjection, or so desirous of change, as to be ready to follow the standard of any protector. Full of those ideas, on which he began to form a scheme, that time, and more perfect information concerning the state of the country, enabled him to mature, he gave a most gracious reception to the Zempoalans, and promised soon to visit their cazique.

In order to perform this promise, it was not necessary to vary the route which he had already fixed for his march. Some officers, whom he had employed to survey the coast, having discovered a village, named Quiabislan, about forty miles to the northward, which, both on account of the fertility of the soil, and commodiousness of the harbour, seemed to be a more proper station for a settlement than that where he was encamped, Cortes determined to remove thither. Zempoala lay in his way, where the cazique received him in the manner which he had reason to expect ; with gifts and caresses, like a man solicitous to gain his good will ; with respect approaching almost to adoration, like one who looked up to him as a deliverer. From him, he learned many particulars as to the character of Montezuma, and the circumstances which rendered his dominion odious. He was a tyrant, as the cazique told him with tears ; haughty, cruel, and suspicious ; who treated his own subjects with arrogance, ruined the conquered provinces by excessive exactions, and

often tore their sons and daughters from them by violence ; the former, to be offered as victims to his gods ; the latter, to be reserved as concubines for himself or favourites. Cortes, in reply to him, artfully insinuated, that one great object of the Spaniards in visiting a country so remote from their own, was to redress grievances, and to relieve the oppressed ; and, having encouraged him to hope for this interposition in due time, he continued his march to Quiabislan.

The spot which his officers had recommended as a proper situation, appeared to him so well chosen, that he immediately marked out ground for a town. The houses to be erected were only huts ; but they were to be surrounded with fortifications, of sufficient strength to resist the assaults of an Indian army. As the finishing of those fortifications, was essential to the existence of a colony, every man in the army, officers as well as soldiers, put his hand to the work, Cortes himself setting them an example of activity and perseverance in labour. The Indians of Zempoala and Quiabislan lent their aid, and this petty station, the parent of so many mighty settlements, was soon in a state of defence.

While engaged in this necessary work, Cortes had several interviews with the caziques of Zempoala and Quiabislan ; and, availing himself of their wonder and astonishment at the new objects which they daily beheld, he gradually inspired them with so high an opinion of the Spaniards, as beings of a superior order, and irresistible in arms, that, relying on their protection, they ventured to insult the Mexican power, at the very name of which they had been accustomed to tremble. Some of Montezuma's officers having appeared to levy the usual tribute, and to demand a certain number of human victims, as an expiation for their guilt in presuming to hold intercourse with those strangers whom the emperor had commanded to leave his dominions, instead of obeying the order, the caziques made them prisoners, treated them with great indignity, and, as their superstition was no less barbarous than that of the Mexicans, they prepared to sacrifice them to their gods. From this last danger, they were delivered by the interposition of Cortes, who manifested the utmost horror at the mention of such a deed. The two caziques having now been impelled to an act of so open rebellion, as left them no hope of safety but in attaching themselves inviolably to the Spaniards, they soon completed their union with them, by formally acknowledging themselves to be vassals of the

same monarch. Their example was followed by the Totonques, a fierce people who inhabited the mountainous part of the country : they willingly subjected themselves to the crown of Castile, and offered to accompany Cortes, with all their forces, in his march to Mexico.

Cortes had now been above three months in New Spain ; and, though this period had not been distinguished by martial exploits, every moment had been employed in operations, which, though less splendid, were more important. By his address in conducting his intrigues with his own army, as well as his sagacity in carrying on his negotiations with the natives, he had already laid the foundation of his future success. But, whatever confidence he might place in the plan which he had formed, he could not avoid perceiving, that, as all his title to command was derived from a doubtful authority, he held it by a precarious tenure. The injuries which Velasquez had received, were such as would naturally prompt him to apply for redress to their common sovereign ; and such a representation, he foresaw, might be given of his conduct, that he had reason to apprehend, not only that he might be degraded from his present rank, but subjected to punishment. Before he began his march, it was necessary to take the most effectual precautions against this impending danger. With this view, he persuaded the magistrates of the colony at Vera Cruz to address a letter to the king, the chief object of which was to justify their own conduct in establishing a colony independent of the jurisdiction of Velasquez. They humbly requested their sovereign to ratify what they had done in his name, and to confirm Cortes in the supreme command by his royal commission. That Charles might be induced more readily to grant what they demanded, they gave him a pompous description of the country which they had discovered, and mentioned the schemes which they had formed, as well as the hopes which they entertained, of reducing the whole to subjection. Cortes himself wrote in a similar strain ; and, as he knew that the Spanish court, accustomed to the exaggerated representations of every new country by its discoverers, would give little credit to their splendid accounts of New Spain, if these were not accompanied with such a specimen of what it contained, as would excite a high idea of its opulence, he solicited his soldiers to relinquish what they might claim as their part of the treasures which had hitherto been collected, in order that the whole might be sent to the king,

Portocarrero and Montejo, the chief magistrates of the colony, were appointed to carry this present to Castile, with express orders not to touch at Cuba in their passage thither.

Meanwhile, a conspiracy, detected by Cortes, filled his mind with most disquieting apprehensions, and prompted him to execute a scheme which he had long revolved. He perceived that the spirit of disaffection still lurked amongst his troops; that though hitherto checked by the uniform success of his schemes, or suppressed by the hand of authority, various events might occur which would encourage and call it forth. He observed, that many of his men, weary of the fatigue of service, longed to revisit their settlements in Cuba; and that upon any appearance of extraordinary danger, or any reverse of fortune, it would be impossible to restrain them from returning. He was sensible that his forces, already too feeble, could bear no diminution, and that a very small defection of his followers would oblige him to abandon the enterprise. After ruminating with much solicitude, upon those particulars, he saw no hope of success, but in cutting off all possibility of retreat, and in reducing his men to the necessity of adopting the same resolution with which he himself was animated, either to conquer or to perish. With this view, he determined to destroy his fleet; but, as he durst not venture to execute so bold a resolution by his single authority, he laboured to bring his soldiers to adopt his ideas with respect to the propriety of this measure. His address in accomplishing this was not inferior to the arduous occasion in which it was employed. He persuaded some, that the ships had suffered so much by having been long at sea, as to be altogether unfit for service; to others, he pointed out what seasonable reinforcement of strength they would derive from the junction of a hundred men, now unprofitably employed as sailors; and to all, he represented the necessity of fixing their eyes and wishes upon what was before them, without once admitting into their thoughts the idea of a retreat. With universal consent, the ships were drawn ashore, and, after stripping them of their sails, rigging, iron-works, and whatever else might be of use, they were broken to pieces. "Thus," observes an admired historian,\* to whose pages we are largely indebted for the account of the conquest of Mexico and Peru, "from an effort of magnanimity, to which there

\* Dr. Robertson,



is nothing parallel in history, five-hundred men voluntarily consented to be shut up in a hostile country, filled with powerful and unknown nations; and, having precluded every means of escape, left themselves without any resource but their own valour and perseverance."

But Justin relates of Agathocles, that, having landed his army on the coast of Africa, he burned his vessels, to deprive his soldiers of all means of flight. Polienus celebrates the memory of Timarchus, a general of the Etolians, for equal boldness; and Quintus Fabius Maximus has left us, amongst his military remarks, another similar instance, if we can give more credit to the report of Frontinus, than to the silence of Plutarch. Yet, if we consider the act of Cortes, with fewer men than any of those commanders, in a more distant country, and less known; without any hope of human succour, amongst a barbarous people, with a tyrant to oppose, so proud and powerful; we shall find his undertaking the greatest, and his resolution the most heroic; or, granting to those great captains the glory of having first led the way, let us allow Cortes that of having gone beyond them in their own track.

Nothing now retarded Cortes: the alacrity of his troops, and the disposition of his allies were equally favourable. He began his march from Zempoala on the 16th of August, with five-hundred men, fifteen horse, and six field-pieces. The rest of his troops, consisting chiefly of those who from age or infirmity were least fit for active service, he left as a garrison at Vera Cruz, under the command of Escalante, an officer of merit, and warmly attached to his interest. The cazique of Zempoala supplied him with provisions, and with two-hundred of those Indians called Tamemes, whose office, in a country where tame animals were unknown, was to carry burthens, and to perform all servile labour. They were a great relief to the Spanish soldiers, who hitherto had been obliged, not only to carry their own baggage, but to drag along the artillery by main force. He offered likewise a considerable body of his troops, but Cortes was satisfied with four-hundred; taking care, however, to choose persons of such note as might prove hostages for the fidelity of their master. Nothing memorable happened in his progress, until he arrived on the confines of Tlascala. The inhabitants of that province, a warlike people, were implacable enemies of the Mexicans, and had been united in an ancient alliance with the caziques of Zempoala. Though less civilized than the

subjects of Montezuma, they were advanced in improvement far beyond the rude nations of America, whose manners we have described. They had made considerable progress in agriculture; they dwelt in large towns; they were not strangers to some species of commerce; and in the imperfect accounts of their institutions and laws, transmitted to us by the early Spanish writers, we discern traces both of distributive justice and of criminal jurisdiction, in their interior police.

Cortes, though he had received information concerning the martial character of this people, flattered himself that his professions of delivering the oppressed from the tyranny of Montezuma, their inveterate enmity to the Mexicans, and the example of their ancient allies, the Zempoalans, might induce the Tlascalans to grant him a friendly reception. In order to dispose them to this, four Zempoalans of great eminence were deputed as ambassadors, to request, in his name, and in that of the cazique, that they would permit the Spaniards to pass through the territories of the republic in their way to Mexico. The four Zempoalans immediately adorned themselves after the manner of ambassadors. They threw over their shoulders a mantle or tippet of cotton, wreathed, and knotted at the ends. In their right hand, they carried a large arrow, with the feathers on high, and in their left a target, made of a shell. The design of the embassy was indicated by the feathers of the arrow:—the red denoted war; the white, peace; after the same manner as the Romans distinguished, by different symbols, the *feciales* and the *caduceatores*. By these signs, they were known and respected in their marches: but they could not deviate from the high-roads of the province through which they were travelling; for, if they were found in any other place, those privileges, held as sacred, were no longer to be extended to them.

With those marks of their employment, the four envoys of Cortes entered Tlascala; and, being recognised in that character, they were lodged in the Calpisca—for so they called the house appropriated for the reception of ambassadors—and the day following the senate met, to give them audience, in a great hall, where they held their councils. The senators were seated, according to their seniority, on low chairs, which they called *yopales*. When the ambassadors appeared, they raised themselves a little from their seats, and welcomed them with moderate courtesy. The former entered with their arrows raised on high, and the points on their heads; a

mode, which, amongst their ceremonies, was accounted the most submissive. Having paid their respects to the senate, they walked leisurely to the middle of the hall, where they kneeled down, and, without raising their eyes, waited for leave to be given them to speak. The eldest senator ordered them to declare their business, and the ambassadors having seated themselves upon their own legs, one of them, who had been selected as the most proper person to make the speech, addressed the assembly, substantially as follows :—

“ Noble Republic, valiant and potent Tlascallans,—The Lord of Zempoala, and the mountain caziques, your friends and confederates, send you health; and, wishing you abundant crops, and the death of your enemies, they now inform you, that certain invincible men are arrived amongst them, from the east, who seem to be deities; for they sail on great palaces, and use thunder and lightning, the peculiar arms of heaven. They are servants of another God, superior to ours, who is offended with tyrannies and sacrifices of human blood. Their captain is ambassador from a very powerful prince, who, by the impulse of his religion, desires to reform the abuses of our country, and redress the violences of Montezuma; and, having already rescued our provinces from the oppression under which they groaned, finds himself constrained to pass through your territories, in his way to Mexico; and desires to know wherein that tyrant has offended you, that he may take your cause in hand, and add it to the rest which justify his undertaking. With this notice, then, of their designs, and with experience of their benignity, we come before you, to request and admonish you, on the part of our caziques, and all their confederates, that you would admit these strangers, as men desirous of doing good, and friends to your allies. On the part of their captain, we assure you, that he comes in a peaceable manner, and only requests that you will grant him a free passage through your country, believing that he desires your welfare, and that his arms are the instruments of justice and reason, which defend the cause of Heaven; in their own nature, good and mild, and hurtful only to the wicked, and where they are provoked.”

Having thus concluded, the four ambassadors raised themselves upon their knees, and, making a profound reverence to the senate, they seated themselves as before, expecting a reply. The senators conferred a little amongst themselves; and one, in the name of all the rest, told them, that they ad-

mitted the proposition of the Zempoalans and Totanaques, their confederates, with all imaginable gratitude; but that the answer which they were to give to the captain of the strangers, required further deliberation.

The ambassadors then retired to their lodging; and the senate "deliberated with closed doors," in relation to the difficulties or conveniences of the proposal. A long debate ensued, and the question was at length decided. But, instead of the favourable answer which was expected, the Tlascalans detained the ambassadors, in a kind of virtual imprisonment, and, without offering them their "passports," they assembled their troops, in order to oppose the unknown invaders, if they attempted to effect their passage by force of arms.

Various motives concurred in precipitating the Tlascalans into this resolution. A fierce nation, shut up within its own narrow precincts, and little accustomed to any intercourse with foreigners, is apt to consider every stranger as an enemy, and, is easily excited to arms. They concluded, from Cortes's proposal of visiting Montezuma in his capital, that, notwithstanding all his professions, he courted the friendship of a monarch whom they both hated and feared. The imprudent zeal of Cortes in violating the temples in Zempoala, filled the Tlascalans with horror; and, as they were no less attached to their superstition than the other nations of New Spain, they were impatient to avenge their injured gods, and to acquire the merit of offering up to them, as victims, those impious men who had dared to profane their altars; they condemned the small number of the Spaniards, as they had not yet measured their own strength with that of these new enemies, and had no idea of the superiority which they derived from their arms and discipline.

After waiting some days, in vain, for the return of his ambassadors, Cortes advanced into the Tlascalan territories, on the thirtieth of August. As the resolutions of a people who delight in war are executed with no less promptitude than they are formed, he found troops in the field, ready to oppose him. They attacked him with great intrepidity; and, in the first encounter, wounded some of the Spaniards, and killed two horses; a loss, in their situation, of great moment, because it was irreparable. From this specimen of their courage, Cortes saw the necessity of proceeding with caution. His army marched in close order; he chose the stations



where he halted, with attention, and fortified every camp with extraordinary care. During fourteen days, he was exposed to almost uninterrupted assaults: the Tlascalans advancing with numerous armies, and renewing the attack in various forms, with a degree of valour and perseverance to which the Spaniards had seen nothing parallel in the new world.

But their superiority in number was of little avail, and the imperfection of their military weapons rendered their valour in a great measure inoffensive. After three battles, and many skirmishes and assaults, not one Spaniard was killed in the field. Arrows and spears, headed with flint or the bones of fishes, stakes hardened in the fire, and wooden swords, though destructive weapons amongst naked Indians, were easily turned aside by the Spanish bucklers, and could hardly penetrate the quilted jackets which the soldiers wore.

Notwithstanding the fury with which the Tlascalans attacked the Spaniards, they seem to have conducted their hostilities with some degree of barbarous generosity. They gave the Spaniards warning of their hostile intentions, and, as they knew that their invaders wanted provisions, and imagined, perhaps, like the other Indians, that they had left their own country because it did not afford them subsistence, they sent to their camp a large supply of poultry and maize, desiring them to eat plentifully, because they scorned to attack an enemy enfeebled by hunger, and it would be an affront to their gods to offer them famished victims, as well as disagreeable to themselves to feed on so emaciated prey.

When they were taught by the first encounter with their new enemies, that it was not easy to execute this threat; when they perceived, in the subsequent engagements, that, notwithstanding all the efforts of their own valour, of which they had a very high opinion, not one of the Spaniards was slain or taken, they began to conceive them to be a superior order of beings, against whom human power could not avail. In this extremity, they had recourse to their priests, requiring them to reveal the mysterious causes of so extraordinary events, and to declare what new means they should employ, in order to repulse those formidable invaders. The priests, after many sacrifices and incantations, delivered this response: "That these strangers were the offspring of the sun, procreated by his animating energy in the regions of the east; that, by day, while cherished by the influence of his parental beams, they were invincible; but by night, when his

reviving heat was withdrawn, their vigour declined and faded like the herbs in the field, and they dwindled down into mortal men."—Theories less plausible have gained credit with more enlightened nations. In consequence of this, the Tlascalans, with the implicit confidence of men who fancy themselves to be under the guidance of Heaven, acted in contradiction to one of their most established maxims in war, and ventured to attack the enemy, with a strong body, in the night-time, in the hope of destroying them when enfeebled and surprised. But Cortes had greater vigilance and discernment, than to be deceived by the rude stratagems of an Indian army. The sentinels at his out-posts, observing some extraordinary movement among the Tlascalans, gave the alarm. In a moment, the troops were under arms, and sallying out, dispersed the party, with great slaughter, without allowing it to approach the camp. The Tlascalans, convinced, by sad experience, that their priests had deluded them, sacrificed two or three of them in one of their temples; and, satisfied that they attempted in vain, either to deceive, or to vanquish their enemies, their fierceness abated, and they began to incline seriously to peace.

The peace which both parties now desired with equal ardour, was soon concluded. The Tlascalans yielded themselves as vassals to the crown of Castile, and engaged to assist Cortes in all his future operations. He took the republic under his protection, and promised to defend their persons and possessions from injury or violence.

This treaty was concluded at a seasonable juncture for the Spaniards. The fatigue of service amongst a small body of men, surrounded by so great a multitude of enemies, was incredible. Half the army was on duty every night, and even the soldiers whose turn it was to rest, slept always on their arms, that they might be ready to run to their posts at a moment's warning. Many of them were wounded; a good number, and amongst these Cortes himself, laboured under the distempers prevalent in hot climates; and several had died since they had set out from Vera Cruz.

The submission of the Tlascalans, and their own triumphant entry into the capital city, where they were received with the reverence paid to beings of a superior order, banished, at once, from the minds of the Spaniards, all memory of past sufferings, dispelled every anxious thought with respect to their future operations, and fully satisfied them that there

was not now any power in America able to withstand their arms.

Tlascala was in those days a very populous city, built upon four hills, of unequal elevations, little distant from each other, extending from east to west. Secure in the natural strength of their rocks, they contained within them all the buildings, forming four commands, or distinct wards, which were united and communicated by several streets with very thick walls, that served as a defence to the town. Each ward was governed by a cazique. The houses were raised moderately high, for they had no second story. They were built of stone, or brick, and, instead of sloping roofs, of tiles, such as were then usual in Spain, they had flat tops and galleries, after the manner of the east.

The whole province was about thirty leagues in circumference ; a broken, mountainous country, but well cultivated in all parts, where the existence of streams enabled the inhabitants to improve the land. The towns were many, and near to each other : the people, from their childhood, were inclined to superstition and the use of arms. They had an abundance of maize, or Indian corn ; and this grain so well rewarded the labour of the husbandman, that it gave the whole province the name of Tlascala, or the Land of Bread. They had a great variety of fruit ; and also of game ; and one of their natural productions was the *cochineal*, a kind of insect, like a small worm, which is generated on the leaves of a wild thorny tree, and extremely valuable as a scarlet dye ; but its use was unknown to the Indians, until they were taught it by the Spaniards.

Cortes remained twenty days in Tlascala, in order to allow his troops a short interval of repose, after so hard service. During that time, he was employed in transactions and inquiries of great moment with respect to his future schemes. In his daily conferences with the Tlascalan chiefs, he received information concerning every particular relative to the state of the Mexican empire, or the qualities of its sovereign, which could be of use in regulating his conduct, whether he should be obliged to act as a friend or as an enemy. As he found that the antipathy of his new allies to the Mexican nation, was no less implacable than had been represented, and perceived how much benefit he might derive from the aid of confederates so powerful, he employed all the arts of insinuation, in order to gain their confidence. Nor was any extraordinary exertion of these required. With a

levity of mind, natural to unpolished men, they were, of their own accord, disposed to run from the extreme of hatred, to that of fondness. Every thing in the appearance and conduct of their guests, was to them matter of wonder. The horses were objects of the greatest astonishment, to all the people of New Spain. At first, they imagined the horse and his rider, like the centaurs of the ancients, to be some monstrous animal of a terrible form; and, supposing that their food was the same as that of men, they brought flesh and bread, to nourish them. Even after they had discovered their mistake, they believed that the horses devoured men in battle, and when they neighed, thought they were demanding their prey. The Tlascalans gazed with admiration at every movement of the Spaniards; and, fancying them to be of heavenly origin, were eager not only to comply with their demands, but to anticipate their wishes. They at length offered to accompany Cortes in his march to Mexico, with all the forces of the republic, under the command of their most experienced captains.

But, after devoting so much pains to the cementing of this union, all the beneficial fruits of it were on the point of being lost, by a new effusion of that intemperate religious zeal, with which Cortes was animated, no less than the other adventurers of the age. They all considered themselves as instruments employed by heaven to propagate the Christian faith; and the less they were qualified, either by their knowledge or morals, for such a function, they were the more eager to discharge it. The profound veneration of the Tlascalans for the Spaniards, having encouraged Cortes to explain to some of their chiefs the doctrines of the Christian religion, and to insist that they should abandon their own superstitions, and embrace the faith of their new friends, they, according to an idea universal amongst barbarous nations, readily acknowledged the truth and excellence of what he taught; but contended, that the Teules of Tlascala were divinities, no less than the God in whom the Spaniards believed; and, as that Being was entitled to the homage of Europeans, so they were bound to revere the same powers which had been worshiped by their ancestors. Cortes continued, nevertheless, to urge his demand in a tone of authority, mingling threats with his arguments, until the Tlascalans could bear it no longer, and conjured him never to mention this again, lest the gods should avenge on their heads the guilt of having listened to such a



proposition. Cortes, astonished and enraged at their obstinacy, prepared to execute by force, what he could not accomplish by persuasion, and was going to overturn their altars, and cast down their idols with the same violent hand as at Zempoala, if father Bartholomew de Olmedo, chaplain to the expedition, had not checked his inconsiderate impetuosity. He represented the imprudence of such an attempt, in a large city, newly reconciled, and filled with people no less superstitious than warlike; he declared that the proceeding at Zempoala had always appeared to him precipitate and unjust; that religion was not to be propagated by the sword, or infidels to be converted by violence; that other weapons were to be employed in this ministry:—patient instruction must enlighten the understanding, and pious example captivate the heart, before men could be induced to abandon error, and embrace the truth. The remonstrances of an ecclesiastic, no less respectable for wisdom than virtue, had their proper weight with Cortes. He left the Tlascalans in the undisturbed exercise of their own rites, requiring only that they should desist from their horrid practice of offering human victims in sacrifice.

As soon as his troops were fit for service, Cortes resolved to continue his march to Mexico, notwithstanding the earnest dissuaves of the Tlascalans, who represented his destruction as unavoidable, if he put himself in the power of a prince so faithless and cruel as Montezuma. As he was accompanied by six-thousand Tlascalans, he had now the command of forces which resembled a regular army. They directed their course towards Cholula; Montezuma, who had at length

*Oct. 13.* consented to admit the Spaniards into his presence, having informed Cortes, that he had given orders for his friendly reception there. Cholula was a considerable town, and, though only five leagues distant from Tlascala, was formerly an independent state, but had been lately subjected to the Mexican empire. This was considered by the people of New Spain as a holy place, the sanctuary and chief seat of their gods, to which pilgrims resorted from every province, and a greater number of human victims were offered in its principal temple, than even in that of Mexico. Montezuma seems to have invited the Spaniards thither, either from some superstitious hope that the gods would not suffer this sacred mansion to be defiled, without pouring down their wrath upon those impious strangers, who ventured to insult their power

in the place of its peculiar residence ; or from a belief that he himself might there attempt to cut them off with more certain success, under the immediate protection of his divinities.

Cortes had been warned by the Tlascalans, before he set out on his march, to keep a watchful eye over the Cholulans. He himself, though received into the town with much seeming respect and cordiality, observed several circumstances in their conduct which excited suspicion. Two of the Tlascalans, who were encamped at some distance from the town, as the Cholulans refused to admit their ancient enemies within its precincts, having found means to enter in disguise, acquainted Cortes, that they observed the women and children of the principal citizens retiring in great hurry every night ; and that ten children had been sacrificed in the chief temple ; a rite which indicated the execution of some warlike enterprise to be approaching. At the same time, Marina the interpreter, received information from an Indian woman of distinction, that the destruction of her friends was concerted ; that a body of Mexican troops lay concealed near the town ; that some of the streets were barricaded, and in others, pits or deep trenches were dug, and slightly covered, as traps into which the horses might fall ; that stones or missive weapons were collected on the tops of the temples, with which to overwhelm the infantry ; that the fatal hour was now at hand, and their ruin unavoidable. Alarmed at this concurring evidence, Cortes secretly arrested three of the chief priests, and extorted from them a confession, that confirmed the intelligence which he had received. As not a moment was to be lost, he instantly resolved to anticipate his enemies, and to inflict upon them so dreadful vengeance, as might strike Montezuma and his subjects with terror. For this purpose, the Spaniards and Zempoalans were drawn up in a large court, which had been allotted for their quarters, near the centre of the town ; the Tlascalans had orders to advance ; the magistrates, and several of the chief citizens were sent for, under various pretexts, and seized. On a signal given, the troops rushed out, and fell upon the multitude, destitute of leaders, and so much astonished, that the weapons dropping from their hands, they stood motionless, and incapable of defence. While the Spaniards pressed them in front, the Tlascalans attacked them in the rear. The streets were filled with bloodshed and death. The temples which afforded a

retreat to the priests and some of the leading men, were set on fire, and they perished in the flames. This scene of horror continued two days, during which, the wretched inhabitants suffered all that the destructive rage of the Spaniards, or the implacable revenge of their Indian allies, could inflict. At length, the carnage ceased, after the slaughter of six-thousand Cholulans, without the loss of a single Spaniard. Cortes then released the magistrates, and, reproaching them bitterly for their intended treachery, declared, that as justice was now appeased, he forgave the offence, but required them to recall the citizens who had fled, and re-establish order in the town.

*Oct. 29.* From Cholula, Cortes advanced directly towards Mexico, which was only twenty leagues distant. In every place through which he passed, he was received as a person possessed of sufficient power to deliver the empire from the oppression under which it groaned; and the caziques or governors communicated to him all the grievances which they felt under the tyrannical government of Montezuma, with that unreserved confidence which men naturally repose in superior beings.

They had approached within view of Mexico, and had met no enemy to oppose their progress, though several circumstances occurred, which led them to suspect that some design was formed to surprise and cut them off. Many messengers arrived successively from Montezuma, permitting them one day to advance, requiring them on the next to retire, as his hopes or fears alternately prevailed; and, so wonderful was this infatuation, that Cortes was almost at the gates of the capital, before the monarch had determined whether to receive him as a friend, or to oppose him as an enemy. But, as no sign of open hostility appeared, the Spaniards, without regarding the fluctuations of Montezuma's sentiments, continued their march along the causeway which led to Mexico through the lake, with great circumspection and the strictest discipline, though without seeming to suspect the prince whom they were about to visit.

*Nov. 8.* When they drew near the city, about a thousand persons, who appeared to be of distinction, came forth to meet them, adorned with plumes, and clad in mantles of fine cotton. Each of these, in his order, passed by Cortes, and saluted him according to the mode deemed most respectful and submissive in their country. They announced



the approach of Montezuma himself, and soon after his harbingers came in sight. There appeared first two-hundred persons in a uniform dress, with large plumes of feathers, alike in fashion, marching two and two, in deep silence, bare-footed, with their eyes fixed on the ground. These were followed by a company of higher rank, in their most showy apparel, in the midst of whom was Montezuma, in a chair or litter richly ornamented with gold, and feathers of various colours. Four of his principal favourites carried him on their shoulders; others supported a canopy of curious workmanship over his head. Before him, marched three officers, with rods of gold in their hand, which they lifted up on high at certain intervals, and at that signal all the people bowed their heads, and hid their faces, as unworthy to look upon so great a monarch. When he drew near, Cortes dismounted, advancing towards him with officious haste, and in a respectful posture. At the same time, Montezuma alighted from his chair, and, leaning on the arms of two of his near relations, approached with a slow and stately pace, his attendants covering the street with cotton cloths, that he might not touch the ground, which, in their opinion, was unworthy of the honour. He was a handsome man, about forty years of age, of a middle stature, and of a frame rather delicate than strong: his nose was aquiline, and his complexion fairer than is general with the Indians: his hair reached a little below his ears; his eyes were lively, his look majestic and thoughtful. He wore a mantle of the finest cotton, tied carelessly on his shoulders, covering the greater part of his body, with the end trailing on the ground, ornamented with jewels of gold, pearls, and precious stones, in so great number, that they seemed rather to oppress than adorn him. His crown was a light mitre of gold, ending in a point before: on his feet, he wore shoes of hammered gold, the straps of which, studded with the same kind of metal, bound them to his feet, and embraced part of his leg, like the Roman military sandals.

Cortes accosted Montezuma with profound reverence, after the European fashion. He returned the salutation, according to the mode of his country, by touching the earth with his hand, and then kissing it. This ceremony, the customary expression of veneration from inferiors towards those who were above them in rank, appeared so amazing condescension in a proud monarch, who scarcely deigned to consider the rest of mankind as of the same species with himself, that



all his subjects firmly believed those persons, before whom he humbled himself in this manner, to be something more than human. Accordingly, they marched through the crowd, the Spaniards frequently, and with much satisfaction, heard themselves denominated *Teules*, or divinities. Nothing material passed in this first interview. Montezuma conducted Cortes to the quarters which he had prepared for his reception, and immediately took leave of him with a politeness not unworthy of a court more refined.—“You are now,” says he, “with your brothers in your own house; refresh yourselves after your fatigue, and be happy until I return.”

The place allotted to the Spaniards for their lodging, was a house built by the father of Montezuma. It was surrounded by a stone wall, with towers at proper distances, which served for defence, as well as ornament, and its apartments and courts were so large, as to accommodate both the Spaniards and their Indian allies. Some chambers, designed for the superior officers, were furnished with cotton hangings of various colours, and the bedsteads had curtains of the same material, like pavilions.

It was a little past noon, when the Spaniards entered their spacious barrack, where there was prepared a splendid banquet for Cortes and the officers of his army, and great abundance of provisions, less delicate, for the private soldiers, with many Indian attendants, who served them with the refreshments, in profound silence and exact order.

In the evening, Montezuma returned to visit his guests, with the same pomp as at their first interview, bringing presents of so great value, not only to Cortes and his officers, but even to the private men, as proved the liberality of the monarch to be equal to the opulence of his kingdom. A long conference ensued, in which Cortes learned the opinion conceived by Montezuma, in respect to the Spaniards. The historians of that period report, that Montezuma having taken his seat with an air of negligence and majesty, and commanded a chair to be brought for Cortes, addressed him, through the medium of an interpreter, in the following manner:—

“Illustrious captain, and valiant stranger,—before you deliver the embassy of the great prince who sent you, you and I must pass over, and bury in oblivion, what fame has published of our persons and conduct; abusing our ears with

idle rumours, which prepossess us against truth, and render it obscure by the impressions of flattery or reproach. In some places, you have been informed, that I am one of the immortal gods; that my power and my person are exalted to the heavens. In others, you have been told, that the business of fortune is to enrich me; that the walls and coverings of my palace are of gold, and that the earth groans beneath the weight of my treasure: you have heard that I am a tyrant, cruel and proud; abhorring justice, and a stranger to mercy; but, as regards both the one and the other of these characters, you have been imposed upon by exaggerations. That you may not imagine me a god, but be sensible of the folly of those who suppose me to be one, this part of my body, said he, uncovering his arm, will undeceive you, and prove that you talk to a mortal, of the same species with the rest of men; but more noble and more powerful. My riches, I deny not, are great; but the representation of my vassals, makes them much greater than they are. This house, in which you lodge, is one of my palaces: behold the walls, made of stone and lime, ordinary materials, which owe their value to art:—now, from both these accounts, you may imagine how likely it is that my tyrannies have been magnified, in the same proportion. Suspend your judgment, at least, till you enter into my reasons; and lay no stress upon the accusations brought against me by my rebellious subjects, until you have first informed yourself, whether that which they call oppression be not chastisement; and whether they censure my severity without my having deserved it.

“After the same manner, have we received information of your own nature and actions. Some have told me that you are gods; that the wild beasts obey you, that you grasp in your hand the thunder, and command the elements. Others have reported, that you are wicked, revengeful, proud; slaves to your vices, and insatiably thirsting for our country’s gold. But now I see you are of the same composition and form, as the rest of men; though you are distinguished from us by some accidents, which the difference of climate occasions amongst mortals. These beasts which obey you, I find are large deer, which you have tamed, and bred in so imperfect a degree of knowledge, as may be acquired by animal instinct. Your arms, which resemble lightning, I conceive to be tubes of unknown metal; the effect of which, like that of our sar-

bacans,\* proceeds from air compressed, which strives for a vent, and forces its way through all impediments. The fire which your tubes discharge with greater noise, is some supernatural secret of that science which is understood by our magicians.

“We must, on both sides, forget all past informations, and be thankful to our eyes, for undeceiving our imaginations. I would have you to understand, before you begin your discourse, that we readily believe that the great prince whom you obey, is descended from our ancient Quezalcoal, Lord of the Seven Caves of the Navatlaques, and lawful king of those seven nations which gave beginning to the Mexican empire. By one of his prophecies, which we reverence as infallible truth, and by a tradition of many ages, preserved in our annals, we know, that he departed from these countries to conquer new regions in the east; leaving a promise, that, in the course of time, his descendants would return, to re-model our laws, and amend our government; and, because the marks which you carry agree with the prophecy, and the prince of the east who sends you, manifests, in your actions, the greatness of so illustrious a progenitor, we have already determined, that all things shall be done, to the utmost of our ability, for his honour; of which, I have thought fit to inform you, that, without any constraint, you may declare what you have to propose, and attribute to so noble a cause, this excess of my condescension.”

Cortes made a reply in his usual style, with respect to the dignity and power of his sovereign, and his intention in sending him into that country; artfully endeavouring so to frame his discourse, that it might coincide as much as possible with the idea formed by Montezuma concerning the origin of the Spaniards. Next morning, Cortes and some of his principal attendants were admitted to a public audience of the emperor. The three subsequent days were employed in viewing the city; the appearance of which, so far superior, in the order of its inhabitants, to any place that the Spaniards had beheld in America, and yet so little resembling the structure of a European city, filled them with surprise and admiration. As Montezuma had indulged Cortes and his principal officers

\* The sarbacan was a long tube, formed of cane; from which, the Mexicans discharged an arrow, with considerable force, by blowing into it, in the manner practised by little boys in the United States, when shooting at birds.



with a view of his court, he resolved, through the influence of vanity, to show them the greater magnificence of his temples. He commanded them to stop a short time at the entrance, and went forward himself, to consult the priests, whether it were lawful for him to bring into the presence of his gods, those who refused to adore them. It was concluded that they might enter; but that Montezuma should first admonish them to conduct themselves with respect. Immediately, all the gates of the most spacious edifice were opened; and Montezuma took upon himself to explain all the secret places of worship, the use of the vessels, and other instruments and images of the temple, with so much ceremony and reverence, that the Spaniards very indecorously burst into laughter, which he did not seem to notice, though he turned and looked upon them, as desiring to keep them within bounds. Here, Cortes, suffering himself to be transported with the zeal excited by his own peculiar religion, addressed himself to Montezuma, and said, "Permit me, sir, to fix the cross before these images of the devil, and you shall see whether they deserve adoration or contempt."—On hearing this proposition, the priests became enraged, and Montezuma found himself in the greatest confusion and perplexity; wanting patience to conceal, and resolution to make known his displeasure. But, endeavouring to smother his resentment, "You might, at least," said he to the Spaniards, "have shown to this place, the respect you owe to my person." Having thus spoken, he went out of the temple, that they might do the same, but stopped on the threshold, and added, with rather more calmness, "You may return to your house, my friends, for I shall remain here, to ask pardon of my gods, for having suffered you to proceed thus far."

From this experiment, and others of the same kind, Cortes, with the advice of two Spanish ecclesiastics, resolved not to talk any more, at that period, on the subject of religion, which seemed only to provoke and harden the heart of Montezuma; but, at the same time, the Spaniards obtained leave to worship God in public, and he himself sent his master-builders to erect a chapel, at his own expense, according to the direction of Cortes. The Spaniards immediately prepared one of the principal rooms of the palace. "They white-washed it, and raised an altar; and, in the front, upon steps richly adorned," relates the historian, De Solis, "they placed the image of our Lady, and, fixing a large cross near



the gate, formed a very decent chapel, where every day they celebrated mass, and recited their rosary, with other acts of piety and devotion; Montezuma with his princes and ministers being often present, admiring the solemnity of the Christian service."

Besides the principal palace, in which Montezuma held his court, he had several houses of pleasure, which adorned the city, and displayed his grandeur. He had aviaries, in which were kept an immense variety of birds,—fowls of the sea, swimming in pools of salt water, and fowls of the lakes and rivers, sporting in pools of fresh;—birds of the air, of most beautiful colours; some prized for the splendour of their plumage; others for the sweetness of their song; besides birds of prey, such as eagles and condors, and hawks, trained like those of Europe, for the field. Nor were there wanting a menagerie of wild-beasts; and dens, in which were daily fed multitudes of hideous and venomous animals, such as rattle-snakes, alligators, and scorpions.

Over the place where the beasts were kept, was a very large apartment for the residence of buffoons, who served for the diversion of the king.

Montezuma had generally attending at his table three or four select buffoons, who were the most remarkable for their pranks. After some interval of repose, his musicians usually made their appearance, and, with a sort of flutes and sea-shells, notwithstanding the discordance of their sounds, they formed a kind of concert. They sung several compositions, in various sorts of metre; which, though unequal in their measure, had something resembling a cadence, varying the tones, not without some method, into music adapted to their ear. The ordinary themes of their songs, were the exploits of their ancestors, and the memorable actions of their kings: these were sung in their temples, and the children committed them to memory, to preserve the achievements of the nation from oblivion; these songs serving as a history, to those who did not understand the pictures and hieroglyphics of their annals. They had also their merry songs, used in dances, and accompanied by a singular, confused kind of music. They were so much addicted to this sort of diversion, as well as to other spectacles and entertainments, that almost every night they had public festivals in some quarter of the city; and they were now more frequent, and celebrated with greater solemnity, in compliment to the Spaniards; Montezuma him-

self not only encouraging, but assisting at them in person, contrary to his accustomed austerity, that these idle diversions, amongst the rest of his ostentation, should contribute to display his grandeur, and the magnificence of his court.

The people frequently assembled in the principal squares, or in the porches of the temples, to enjoy the diversion of shows and games. Parties were matched against each other, to shoot at a mark, or give other proofs of their dexterity, in managing the bow and arrow. They ran races, and wrestled for wagers; and the victors were likewise honoured by a public reward, as was the custom, on similar occasions, in ancient Greece. Some of the aspirants were extremely active, and, like the unrivalled Cline, of the present day, could dance on a rope without a pole; and some could dance, "after a most amazing manner," with another of those rope-dancers on their shoulders.—They played likewise at ball, with a kind of "bandy," something in the manner of the sport called "shinny," by the boys of the United States; but resembling, in all its peculiarities, rather the gymnastic and truly noble game of "hurling," as practised by the peasantry in the southern counties of Ireland.

Mexico, or Tenuchtitlan, as it was anciently called by the natives, is situated in a large plain, environed by mountains of so great height, that, though within the torrid zone, the temperature of its climate is mild and healthful. All the streams which descend from the high grounds are collected in several lakes, the two largest of which, of about ninety miles in circuit, communicate with each other. The waters of the one are fresh; those of the other, brackish. On the banks of the latter, and on some small islands adjoining them, was built the capital of Montezuma's empire. The access to the city was by artificial causeways or streets, formed of stones and earth, about thirty feet in breadth. As the waters of the lake, during the rainy season, overflowed the flat country, these causeways were of considerable length. That of Tacuba, on the west, extended a mile and a half; that of Tepeaca, on the north west, three miles; that of Cuoyacan, towards the south, six miles. On the east, there was no causeway, and the city could be approached only by canoes. In each of these causeways, were openings, at proper intervals, through which the waters flowed, and over these were laid beams of timber, which being covered with earth, the causeway or street had everywhere a uniform appearance.

As the approaches to the city were singular, its construction was remarkable. Not only the temples of their gods, but the houses belonging to their monarch, and to persons of distinction, were of so large dimensions, that, in comparison with any other buildings hitherto discovered in America, they might be termed magnificent. The habitations of the common people were mean, resembling the huts of other Indians. But they were all placed in a regular manner, on the banks of the canals which passed through the city, in some of its districts, or on the sides of the street which intersected it in other quarters. In several places were large openings or squares, one of which, allotted for the great market, is said to have been so spacious as to accommodate fifty-thousand persons. In this city, the pride of the new world, and the noblest monument of the industry and art of man, while unacquainted with the use of iron, and destitute of aid from any domestic animal, the Spaniards, who are most moderate in their computations, reckon that there were at least sixty-thousand inhabitants.

But how much soever the novelty of those objects might amuse or astonish the Spaniards, they felt the utmost solicitude with respect to their own situation. From a concurrence of circumstances, no less unexpected than favourable to their progress, they had been allowed to penetrate into the heart of a powerful kingdom, and were now lodged in its capital, without having once met with open opposition from its monarch. The Tlascalans had earnestly dissuaded them from placing such confidence in Montezuma, as to enter a city of so peculiar a situation as Mexico, where that prince would have them at his mercy, shut up as it were in a snare, from which it was impossible to escape. They assured him that the Mexican priests had, in the name of the gods, counseled their sovereign to admit the Spaniards into the capital, that he might cut them off there with perfect security, at one blow. They now perceived, too plainly, that the apprehensions of their allies were not destitute of foundation; that, by breaking the bridges placed at certain intervals on the causeway, or by destroying part of the causeways themselves, their retreat would be rendered impracticable, and they must remain cooped up in the centre of a hostile city, surrounded by multitudes sufficient to overwhelm them, and without a possibility of receiving aid from their allies.

These considerations, so obvious as to occur to the hum-



blest soldier, did not escape the vigilant sagacity of their general. Before he set out from Cholula, Cortes had received advice from Vera Cruz, that Quialpopoca, one of the Mexican generals on the frontiers, having assembled an army in order to attack some of the people whom the Spaniards had encouraged to throw off the Mexican yoke, Escalante had marched out, with part of the garrison, to support his allies; that an engagement had ensued, in which, though the Spaniards were victorious, Escalante, with seven of his men, had been mortally wounded, his horse killed, and one Spaniard had been surrounded by the enemy, and taken alive; that the head of this unfortunate captive, after being carried in triumph to different cities, in order to convince the people that their invaders were not immortal, had been sent to Mexico. Cortes, though alarmed by this intelligence, as an indication of Montezuma's hostile intentions, had continued his march. But, as soon as he entered Mexico, he became sensible, that, from an excess of confidence in the superior valour and discipline of his troops, he had pushed forward into a situation, where it was difficult to continue, and from which it was dangerous to retire. Disgrace, and perhaps ruin, was the certain consequence of attempting the latter. The situation was trying, but his mind was equal to the emergency; and, after revolving the matter with deep attention, he fixed upon a plan, no less extraordinary than daring. He determined to seize Montezuma in his palace, and to carry him as a prisoner to the Spanish quarters. From the superstitious veneration of the Mexicans for the person of their monarch, as well as their implicit submission to his will, he hoped, by having Montezuma in his power, to acquire the supreme direction of their affairs; or, at least, with a pledge so sacred in his hands, he entertained no doubt of being secure from any effort of their violence.

This, he immediately proposed to his officers, and it was agreed instantly to make the attempt. At his usual hour of visiting Montezuma, Cortes went to the palace, accompanied by Alvarado, Sandoval, Lugo, Velasquez de Leon, and Davila, five of his principal officers, and as many trusty soldiers. Thirty chosen men followed, not in regular order, but sauntering at some distance, as if they had no object but curiosity; small parties were posted at proper intervals, in all the streets leading from the Spanish quarters to the court; and the remainder of his troops, with the Tlascalcan allies, were under



arms, ready to sally out on the first alarm. Cortes and his attendants were admitted without suspicion; the Mexicans retiring, as usual, out of respect. He addressed the monarch in a tone very different from that which he had employed in former conferences; reproaching him bitterly as the author of the violent assault made upon the Spaniards by one of his officers, and demanded public reparation for the loss which they had sustained by the death of some of their companions, as well as for the insult offered to the great prince under whom they served. Montezuma, confounded at this unexpected accusation, and changing colour, either from consciousness of guilt, or from feeling the indignity with which he was treated, asserted his own innocence with great earnestness, and, as a proof of it, gave orders instantly to bring Qualpopoca and his accomplices prisoners to Mexico. Cortes, replied, with seeming complaisance, that a declaration so respectable left no doubt remaining in his own mind, but that something more was requisite to satisfy his followers; who would never be convinced that Montezuma did not harbour hostile intentions against them, unless, as an evidence of his confidence and attachment, he removed from his own palace, and took up his residence in the Spanish quarters, where he should be served and honoured as became a great monarch. The first mention of so strange a proposal, bereaved Montezuma of speech, and almost of motion. At length, indignation gave him utterance, and he haughtily answered, "That persons of his rank were not accustomed voluntarily to surrender themselves as prisoners; and, were he mean enough to do so, his subjects would not permit such an affront to be offered to their sovereign."—Cortes, unwilling to employ force, endeavoured alternately to soothe and to intimidate him. The altercation became warm; and, having continued above three hours, Velasquez de Leon, an impetuous and gallant young man, exclaimed with impatience, "Why waste more time in vain? Let us either seize him instantly, or stab him to the heart."—The threatening voice and fierce gestures with which these words were uttered, struck Montezuma. He demanded of Marina, who accompanied Cortes as his interpreter, what it was that the Spanish general spoke with so much vehemence; and she, with an ingenuity which never failed her on difficult occasions, replied in such a manner as if she apprehended being overheard by the Spaniards; "My lord, you run a great risk,

in not yielding to the solicitations of these people: you already know their determination, and the supernatural power by which they are assisted. I am your loyal subject: my thoughts have no other employment than to do you service, and I am likewise one of their confidants, and well acquainted with the secret of their intentions. If you go with them, you will be treated with all the respect due to your person and dignity:—by longer resistance, you endanger your life!”

This brief exhortation, well-timed, and delivered with address, prevailed upon Montezuma. Without further opposition, he rose from his seat, and said to Cortes, “I trust myself into your hands. Let us go to your quarters: it is the will of the gods, since you have carried your point, and I am resigned.”

His officers were called, he communicated to them his resolution, and commanded them to make ready his chair and equipage. Though astonished and afflicted, they presumed not to question their master’s will, but carried him, in silent pomp, to the Spanish quarters.

When it was known that the strangers were conveying away the emperor, the people broke out into the wildest transports of grief and rage; threatening the Spaniards with immediate destruction, as the punishment justly due to their impious audacity. But, as soon as Montezuma appeared with a seeming gaiety of countenance, and waved his hand, the tumult was hushed; and, upon his declaring it to be of his own choice that he went to reside for some time amongst his new friends, the multitude quietly dispersed.

“Thus,” to use the language of an elegant historian, whose name we have already placed in our margin, “was a powerful prince seized by a few strangers, in the midst of his capital, at noonday, and carried off as a prisoner, without bloodshed or opposition. History contains nothing parallel to this event, either with respect to the temerity of the attempt, or the success of the execution; and, were not all the circumstances of this extraordinary transaction authenticated by the most unquestionable evidence, they would appear so wild and extravagant, as to go far beyond the bounds of that probability which must be preserved even in fictitious narrations.”

Montezuma was received in the Spanish quarters with all the ceremonious respect which Cortes had promised. He was attended by his own domestics, and served with his usual

state. His principal officers had free access to him, and he conducted every function of government as if he had been at perfect liberty. But to none of his servants or ministers, did he disclose the secret of his confinement; either because he was ashamed to own it, or that he feared the loss of his life, if they made the least disturbance. The Spaniards, however, watched him with the scrupulous vigilance which was natural, in guarding so important a prize; endeavouring, at the same time, to soothe and reconcile him to his situation, by every external demonstration of regard. Some evenings, he used to play with Cortes at "tololoque;" which is a game with little balls of gold, with which they endeavoured to strike down certain small pins of the same metal. Montezuma distributed his winnings amongst the Spaniards; and Cortes presented the fruits of his good fortune to the inferior officers of his imperial guest. Montezuma would sometimes rally Pedro de Alverado, who counted for them, for his marking in favour of Cortes, and pleasantly reproached him for being a bad reckoner; nevertheless, he desired him to mark, and to keep a fair account.

But from captive princes, the hour of humiliation and suffering is never far distant. Twenty days had scarcely elapsed, when the officer of the guard, who had been despatched by the orders of Montezuma, to the frontiers of Vera Cruz, returned, bringing prisoners Qualpopoca, together with his son, and five of the principal officers; who, on seeing the royal signet, had surrendered themselves without resistance. The emperor delivered them to Cortes, that he might inquire into the nature of their crime, and determine their punishment. They were formally tried by a Spanish court-martial; and though they had acted no other part than what became loyal subjects and brave men, in obeying the orders of their lawful sovereign, and in opposing the invaders of their country, they were condemned to be burned alive. The execution of deeds so atrocious is seldom long suspended. The unhappy victims were instantly led forth, the pile on which they were laid being composed of the weapons collected in the royal magazine for the public defence.

But these were not the most shocking indignities which the Mexicans had to bear. Convinced that Qualpopoca would not have ventured to attack Escalante without orders from his master, the Spaniards were not satisfied with inflicting vengeance on the instrument employed in committing that

crime, while the author of it escaped with impunity. Just before Qualpopoca was led out to suffer, Cortes entered the apartment of Montezuma, followed by some of his officers, and a soldier carrying a pair of fetters ; and, approaching the monarch with a stern countenance, told him, that as the persons who were now to undergo the punishment which they merited, had charged him as the cause of the outrage committed, it was necessary that he likewise should make atonement for that guilt ; then, turning away abruptly, without waiting for a reply, he commanded the soldier to put the fetters upon his legs. The orders were instantly executed. The disconsolate monarch, trained up with an idea that his person was sacred and inviolable, and considering this profanation of it as the prelude of immediate death, broke out into loud lamentations and complaints. His attendants, speechless with horror, fell at his feet, bathed them with their tears ; and, bearing up the fetters in their hands, endeavoured with officious tenderness to lighten their pressure ; nor did their grief and despondency abate, until Cortes returned from the execution, and with a cheerful countenance ordered the fetters to be taken off.

1520. The rigour with which Cortes punished the unhappy persons who first presumed to lay violent hands upon his followers, seems to have made all the impression that he desired. The spirit of Montezuma was not only overawed, but subdued. During six months that Cortes remained in Mexico, the monarch continued in the Spanish quarters, with an appearance of as entire satisfaction and tranquillity, as if he had resided there, not from constraint, but through choice. His ministers and officers attended him as usual. He took cognizance of all affairs ; every order was issued in his name. The external aspect of government appearing the same, and all its ancient forms being scrupulously observed, the people were so little sensible of any change, that they obeyed the mandates of their monarch with the usual submissive reverence.

Thus, by the fortunate temerity of Cortes in seizing Montezuma, the Spaniards at once secured to themselves more extensive authority in the Mexican empire than it was possible to have acquired in a long course of time by open force ; and they exercised more absolute sway in the name of another, than they could have done in their own.

Cortes availed himself to the utmost, of the power which



he possessed of being able to act in the name of Montezuma. He sent some Spaniards, whom he judged best qualified for such commissions, into different parts of the empire, accompanied by persons of distinction, whom Montezuma appointed to attend them, both as guides and protectors. They visited most of the provinces, viewed their soil and productions, surveyed with particular care the districts which yielded gold or silver, fixed upon several places as proper stations for future colonies, and endeavoured to prepare the minds of the people for submitting to the Spanish yoke. While they were thus employed, Cortes, in the name and by the authority of Montezuma, degraded some of the principal officers in the empire, whose abilities or independent spirit excited his jealousy, and substituted in their place persons less capable or more obsequious.

One thing was still wanting, to complete his security. He wished to have such a command of the lake, as might ensure a retreat, if, either from levity or disgust, the Mexicans should take arms against him, and break down the bridges or causeways. This, too, his own address, and the facility of Montezuma, enabled him to accomplish. Having frequently entertained his prisoner with pompous accounts of the European marine and art of navigation, he awakened his curiosity to see those moving palaces which had made their way through the water without oars. Under pretext of gratifying this desire, Cortes persuaded Montezuma to appoint some of his subjects to convey to Mexico, part of the naval stores which the Spaniards had deposited at Vera Cruz, and to employ others in cutting down and preparing timber. With their assistance, the Spanish carpenters soon completed two brigantines, which afforded a frivolous amusement to the monarch, and were considered by Cortes as a certain resource, if he should be obliged to retire.

Montezuma was amongst the first of the Mexicans who indulged their curiosity, in witnessing the evolutions of a species of vessels entirely novel in his dominions. For this purpose, he fixed upon a place where the lake runs within the land, in the manner of a creek, and, at the time appointed—one of their most solemn hunting days—all the canoes, belonging to the royal fleet, were, early in the morning, on the lake, with his whole family, retinue, and huntsmen. He added to the usual number of rowers, and ordered them to exert their utmost activity and strength; not without a pre-

sumption that they would gain credit by the lightness of the canoes, to the disgrace of the Spanish vessels, which, in their opinion, were heavy and difficult to govern. But it was not long before they were undeceived; for the brigantines set out with sails and oars, opportunely favoured by the wind, and left the canoes a long way behind, to the great astonishment of the Indians. This was a day of much diversion to the Spaniards, as well on account of the novelty and manner of hunting, as of the profuseness and magnificence of the banquets; and Montezuma took great pleasure in rallying his rowers, for their vain endeavours to overtake the brigantines, and gloried in the victory of the Spaniards, as his own. After their return, all the inhabitants of the city went out, in crowds, to behold those floating houses, as they termed the brigantines in their own language. They particularly admired the management of the rudder, and the sails, which, in their opinion, commanded both the water and the wind; an invention which the most intelligent amongst them beheld as an ingenuity far beyond their comprehension, and the majority of the people as an art supernatural, and a dominion over the elements themselves.

Thus, had the Spanish general excited the admiration and respect of the inhabitants of Mexico, by the very instruments designed for their destruction. Encouraged by so many instances of the monarch's tame submission to his will, Cortes ventured to put it to a proof still more trying. He urged Montezuma to acknowledge himself a vassal of the king of Castile, to hold his crown of him as superior, and to subject his dominions to the payment of an annual tribute. With this requisition, the last and most humbling that can be made to one possessed of sovereign authority, Montezuma was so obsequious as to comply; and the act of submission and homage was executed with all the formalities which the Spaniards were pleased to prescribe.

Montezuma, at the desire of Cortes, accompanied this profession of fealty with a magnificent present to his new sovereign; and, after his example, his subjects brought in very liberal contributions. The Spaniards now collected all the treasure which had been either voluntarily bestowed upon them at different times by Montezuma, or had been extorted from his people under various pretexts; and, having melted the gold and silver, the value of these, without including jewels and ornaments of various kinds, which

were preserved on account of their curious workmanship, amounted to six-hundred-thousand pesos. The soldiers were impatient to have it divided, and Cortes complied with their desire. A fifth of the whole was first set apart as the tax due to the king; another fifth was allotted to Cortes, as commander-in-chief; the sums advanced by Velasquez, by Cortes, and by some of the officers, towards defraying the expense of fitting out the armament, were then deducted; and the remainder was divided amongst the army, including the garrison of Vera Cruz, in proportion to their different ranks.

But, however pliant Montezuma might be in other matters, with respect to one point he was inflexible. Though Cortes often urged him, with the importunate zeal of a missionary, to renounce his false gods, and to embrace the Christian faith, he always rejected the proposition with horror. Superstition, amongst the Mexicans, was formed into so regular and complete a system, that its institutions naturally made a strong impression upon the mind; and, while the rude tribes in other parts of America were easily induced to relinquish a few notions and rites, so loose and arbitrary as hardly to merit the name of a public religion, the Mexicans adhered tenaciously to their mode of worship, which, however barbarous, was accompanied with such order and solemnity, as to render it an object of the highest veneration. Cortes, finding all his attempts ineffectual to shake the constancy of Montezuma, was so much enraged at his obstinacy, that, in a transport of zeal, he led out his soldiers to throw down the idols in the great temple, by force. But the priests taking arms in defence of their altars, and the people crowding with great ardour to support them, the prudence of Cortes overruled his zeal, and induced him to desist from this rash attempt, after dislodging the idols from one of the shrines, and placing in their stead an image of the Virgin Mary.

From that moment, the Mexicans, who had permitted the imprisonment of their sovereign, and suffered the exactions of strangers without a struggle, began to meditate how they might expel or destroy the Spaniards, and thought themselves called upon to avenge their insulted deities. For this purpose, the priests and leading men held frequent consultations with Montezuma. But, as it might prove fatal to the captive monarch to attempt either the one or the other by violence, he was willing to try more gentle means. Having called Cortes into his presence, he observed, that now, as all the

purposes of his embassy were fully accomplished, the gods had declared their will, and the people signified their desire, that he and his followers should instantly depart out of the empire. With this, he required them to comply, or unavoidable destruction would fall suddenly on their heads. The tenor of this unexpected requisition, as well as the determined tone in which it was uttered, left Cortes no room to doubt that it was the result of some deep scheme, concerted between Montezuma and his subjects. He quickly perceived that he might derive more advantage from a seeming compliance with the monarch's inclination, than from an ill-timed attempt to change or to oppose it; and replied, with great composure, that he had already begun to prepare for returning to his own country; but, as he had destroyed the vessels in which he arrived, some time was requisite for building other ships. This appeared reasonable. A number of Mexicans were sent to Vera Cruz to cut down timber, and some Spanish carpenters were appointed to superintend the work. Cortes flattered himself, that, during this interval, he should either find means to avert the threatened danger, or receive such reinforcements as would enable him to despise it.

Almost nine months had elapsed, since Portocarrero and Montejo had sailed with his despatches to Spain; and he daily expected their return with a confirmation of his authority from the king. Without this, his condition was insecure and precarious, and, after all the great exploits which he had accomplished, it might be his doom to bear the name and suffer the punishment of a traitor. Rapid and extensive as his progress had been, he could not hope to complete the reduction of a great empire with so small a body of men, which, by this time, diseases of various kinds had considerably thinned; nor could he apply for recruits to the Spanish settlements in the islands, until he received the royal approbation of his proceedings.

While he remained in this most embarrassing situation, anxious about what was past, uncertain with respect to the future, and, by the late declaration of Montezuma, oppressed with a new addition of cares, a Mexican courier arrived, with an account of some ships having appeared on the coast. Cortes, with fond credulity, imagining that his messengers had returned from Spain, and that the completion of all his wishes and hopes was at hand, imparted the glad tidings to his companions, who received them with transports of mutual



gratulation. Their joy was not of long continuance. A courier from Sandoval, whom Cortes had appointed to succeed Escalante in command at Vera Cruz, brought certain information that the armament was fitted out by Velasquez, governor of Cuba, and, instead of bringing the expected aid, threatened them with immediate destruction.

The motives which prompted Velasquez to this violent measure, are obvious. From the circumstances of Cortes's departure, it was impossible not to suspect his intention of throwing off all dependence upon him. His neglecting to transmit any account of his operations to Cuba, strengthened this suspicion, which was at last confirmed, beyond doubt, by the indiscretion of the officers whom Cortes sent to Spain. From some motive, not clearly explained by the cotemporary historians, they touched at the island of Cuba, contrary to the peremptory orders of their general. By this means, Velasquez not only learned that Cortes and his followers, after formally renouncing all connexion with him, had established an independent colony in New Spain, and were soliciting the king to confirm their proceedings by his authority; but he obtained particular information concerning the opulence of the country, the valuable presents received by Cortes, and the inviting prospects of success that opened to his view. Every passion which can agitate an ambitious mind, now raged in the bosom of Velasquez, and, with united force, excited him to make an extraordinary effort, in order to be avenged on the author of his wrongs, and to wrest from him his usurped authority and conquests. Nor did he want the appearance of a good title, to justify such an attempt. The agent whom he sent to Spain with an account of Grijalva's voyage, had met a most favourable reception; and, from the specimens which he produced, so high expectations were formed concerning the opulence of New Spain, that Velasquez was authorised to prosecute the discovery of the country, and appointed governor of it during life, with more extensive power and privileges than had been granted to any adventurer from the time of Columbus. Elated by this distinguishing mark of favour, and warranted to consider Cortes not only as intruding upon his jurisdiction, but as disobedient to the royal mandate, he determined to vindicate his own rights, and the honour of his sovereign, by force of arms. In a short time, an armament was completed consisting of eighteen ships, which had on board eighty horsemen, eight-

hundred foot soldiers, of which eighty were musketeers, and a hundred-and-twenty cross-bow men, together with a train of twelve pieces of cannon. As Velasquez's experience of the fatal consequence of committing to another, what he ought to have executed himself, had not rendered him more enterprising, he vested the command of this formidable body, which, in the infancy of the Spanish power in America, merits the appellation of an army, in Pamphilo de Narvaez, with instructions to seize Cortes and his principal officers; to send them prisoners to him, and then to complete the discovery and conquest of the country, in his name.

*April.* After a prosperous voyage, Narvaez landed his men, without opposition, near St. Juan de Ulua. Three soldiers, whom Cortes had sent to search for mines in that district, immediately joined him. By this accident, he not only received information concerning the progress and situation of Cortes, but, as these soldiers had made some progress in the knowledge of the Mexican language, he acquired interpreters, by whose means he was enabled to hold some intercourse with the people of that country. But, according to the low cunning of deserters, they framed their intelligence with more attention to what they thought would be agreeable, than to what they knew to be true; and represented the situation of Cortes to be so desperate, and the disaffection of his followers to be so general, as increased the natural confidence and presumption of Narvaez. His first operation, however, might have taught him not to rely on their partial accounts. Having sent to summon the governor of Vera Cruz to surrender, Guevara, a priest whom he employed in that service, made the requisition with such insolence, that Sandoval, an officer of high spirit, and zealously attached to Cortes, instead of complying with his demands, seized him and his attendants, and sent them to Mexico, in chains.

Cortes received them not like enemies, but as friends; and, condemning the severity of Sandoval, set them immediately at liberty. By this well-timed clemency, seconded by caresses and presents, he gained their confidence, and drew from them such particulars concerning the force and intentions of Narvaez, as gave him a full view of the impending danger. He had not to contend now with half naked Indians, no match for him in war, and still more inferior in the arts of policy; but to take the field against an army, in courage and martial discipline equal to his own, in number far supe-

rior, acting under the sanction of royal authority, and commanded by an officer of known bravery. He was informed that Narvaez, more solicitous to gratify the resentment of Velasquez, than attentive to the honour or interest of his country, had begun his intercourse with the natives, by representing him and his followers as fugitives and outlaws, guilty of rebellion against their own sovereign, and of injustice in invading the Mexican empire; and had declared that his chief object in visiting the country was to punish the Spaniards who had committed these crimes, and to rescue the Mexicans from oppression. He soon perceived, that the same unfavourable representations of his character and actions, had been conveyed to Montezuma; and that Narvaez had found means to assure him, that as the conduct of those who kept him under restraint was highly displeasing to the king his master, he was charged not only to rescue an injured monarch from confinement, but to reinstate him in the possession of his ancient power and independence. Animated with this prospect of being set free from subjection to strangers, the Mexicans, in several provinces, began openly to revolt from Cortes, and to regard Narvaez as a deliverer, no less able than willing to save them. Montezuma himself held a secret intercourse with the new commander, and seemed to court him as a person superior in power and dignity to those Spaniards whom he had hitherto revered as the first of men.

Such, were the various aspects of danger and difficulty which presented themselves to the view of Cortes. No situation can be conceived more trying to the capacity and firmness of a general, or where the choice of the plan which ought to be adopted was more difficult. After revolving every scheme with deep attention, Cortes fixed upon that, which in execution was most hazardous, but, if successful, would prove most beneficial to himself and to his country; and, with the decisive intrepidity suited to desperate situations, determined to make one bold effort for victory, under every disadvantage, rather than sacrifice his own conquests and the Spanish interest in Mexico.

But, though he foresaw that the contest must be terminated finally by arms, it would have been not only indecent, but criminal, to have marched against his countrymen, without attempting to adjust matters by an amicable negotiation. In this service, he employed Olmedo, his chaplain; to whose

character the function was well suited, and who possessed, besides such prudence and address as qualified him to conduct the secret intrigues in which Cortes placed his chief confidence. Narvaez rejected, with scorn, every scheme of accommodation, and was with difficulty restrained from laying violent hands upon Olmedo and his attendants. He met, however, a more favourable reception amongst the followers of Narvaez; to many of whom, he delivered letters, either from Cortes, or his officers, their ancient friends and companions. Cortes artfully accompanied these with presents of rings, chains of gold, and other trinkets of value, which inspired those needy adventurers with high ideas of the wealth that he had acquired, and with envy of the good fortune of those who were engaged in his service. Some, from hopes of becoming sharers in those rich spoils, declared for an immediate accommodation with Cortes. Others, from public spirit, laboured to prevent a civil war, which, whatever party should prevail, must shake, and perhaps subvert the Spanish power, in a country where it was so imperfectly established. Narvaez disregarded both, and, by a public proclamation, denounced Cortes and his adherents as rebels and enemies to their country. Cortes, it is probable, was not much surprised at the untractable arrogance of Narvaez; and, after having given such a proof of his own pacific disposition, as might justify his recourse to other means, he determined to advance towards an enemy whom he had laboured in vain to appease.

*May.* He left a-hundred-and-fifty men in the capital, under the command of Pedro de Alvarado, an officer of distinguished courage, for whom the Mexicans had conceived a singular degree of respect. To the custody of this slender garrison, he committed a great city, with all the wealth he had amassed, and what was of still greater importance, the person of the imprisoned monarch, from whom he concealed, with his utmost art, the real cause of his march.

His strength, even after it was reinforced by the junction of Sandoval and the garrison of Vera Cruz, did not exceed two-hundred-and-fifty men. As he hoped for success chiefly from the rapidity of his motions, his troops were not encumbered either with baggage or artillery. But as he dreaded extremely the impression which the enemy might make with their cavalry, he had provided against this danger, with the foresight and sagacity which distinguish a great commander. Having observed that the Indians in the province of Chinan-



lla, used spears of extraordinary length and force, he armed his soldiers with these, and accustomed them to that deep and compact arrangement which the use of this formidable weapon enabled them to assume.

With this small but firm battalion, Cortes advanced towards Zempoala, of which Narvaez had taken possession. During his march, he made repeated attempts towards some accommodation with his opponent. But Narvaez requiring that Cortes and his followers should instantly recognise his title to be governor of New Spain, in virtue of the powers which he derived from Velasquez; and Cortes refusing to submit to any authority which was not founded on a commission from the emperor himself, under whose immediate protection he and his adherents had placed their infant colony; all these attempts proved fruitless.

Cortes was a leader of greater abilities and experience, than, on equal ground, to fight an enemy so far superior in number, and so much better appointed. Having taken his station on the opposite bank of the river de Canoas, where he knew that he could not be attacked, he beheld the approach of the enemy without concern. It was then the beginning of the wet season, and the rain had poured down, during a great part of the day, with the violence peculiar to the torrid zone. The followers of Narvaez, unaccustomed to the hardships of military service, murmured so much at being thus fruitlessly exposed, that, from their unsoldierlike impatience, as well as his own contempt of his adversary, their general permitted them to retire to Zempoala. The very circumstance which induced them to quit the field, encouraged Cortes to form a scheme by which he hoped at once to terminate the war.

Having passed the river de Canoas, which was much swelled with the rains, not without difficulty, the water reaching almost to their chins, his little army advanced in profound silence, each man armed with his sword, his dagger, and his Chinantlan spear. Narvaez, remiss in proportion to his security, had posted only two sentinels to watch the motions of an enemy whom he had so good cause to dread. One of these was seized by the advanced guard of Cortes's troops, the other made his escape, and, hurrying to the town with all the precipitation of fear and zeal, gave so timely notice of the enemy's approach, that there was full leisure to prepare for their reception. But, through the arrogance and infatua-

tion of Narvaez, this important interval was lost. He imputed this alarm to the cowardice of the sentinel, and treated with derision the idea of being attacked by forces so unequal to his own.—The shouts of Cortes's soldiers rushing on to the assault, convinced him at last, that the danger which he despised was real.

In the first encounter, Narvaez was wounded in the eye with a spear, and, falling to the ground, was dragged down the steps, and in a moment put in fetters. The cry of victory resounded amongst the troops of Cortes. Those who had sallied out with their leader, now maintained the conflict feebly, and began to surrender. Amongst the remainder of his soldiers, stationed in two smaller towers of the temple, terror and confusion prevailed. The darkness was so great, that they could not distinguish between their friends and foes. Their own artillery was pointed against them. Wherever they turned their eyes, they beheld lights gleaming through the obscurity of night, which, though proceeding only from a variety of shining insects, that abound in moist and sultry climates, their affrighted imaginations represented as numerous bands of musketeers, advancing with kindled matches to the attack. After a short resistance, the soldiers compelled their officers to capitulate, and, before morning, all laid down their arms, and submitted quietly to their conquerors.

This complete victory proved the more acceptable, as it was gained almost without bloodshed; only two soldiers being killed on the side of Cortes, and two officers with fifteen private men, of the adverse faction. Cortes treated the vanquished not like enemies, but as countrymen and friends; and offered either to send them back directly to Cuba, or to take them into his service, as partners in his fortune, on equal terms with his own soldiers. This latter proposition, seconded by a seasonable distribution of some presents from Cortes, and liberal promises of more, opened prospects so agreeable to the romantic expectations which had invited them to engage in this service, that all, a few partisans of Narvaez excepted, acceded to it, and vied with each other in professions of fidelity and attachment to a general, whose recent success had given them so striking a proof of his abilities for command; and, by a series of events no less fortunate than uncommon, Cortes not only escaped from perdition which seemed inevitable, but, when he had least reason to expect

it, was placed at the head of a thousand Spaniards, ready to follow wherever he should lead them.

The prudent conduct and good fortune of Cortes were equally conspicuous. If, by the rapidity of his operations after he began his march, he had not brought matters to so speedy an issue, even this decisive victory would have come too late to save his companions whom he left in Mexico. A few days after the discomfiture of Narvaez, a courier arrived, with an account that the Mexicans had taken arms, and, having seized and destroyed the two brigantines which Cortes had built in order to secure the command of the lake, and attacked the Spaniards in their quarters, had killed several of them, and wounded more, had reduced to ashes their magazine of provisions, and carried on hostilities with such fury, that, though Alvarado and his men defended themselves with undaunted resolution, they must either be soon cut off by famine, or sink under the multitude of their enemies. This revolt was excited by motives which rendered it still more alarming. On the departure of Cortes for Zempoala, the Mexicans flattered themselves, that the long expected opportunity of restoring their sovereign to liberty, and of vindicating their country from the odious dominion of strangers, had at length arrived; that, while the forces of their oppressors were divided, and the arms of one party turned against the other, they might triumph with greater facility over both. Consultations were held, and schemes formed with this intention. The Spaniards in Mexico, conscious of their own feebleness, suspected and dreaded those machinations. Alvarado, though a gallant officer, possessed neither that extent of capacity, nor dignity of manners, by which Cortes had acquired such an ascendancy over the minds of the Mexicans, as never allowed them to form a just estimate of his weakness or their own strength. Alvarado knew no mode of supporting his authority, but force. Instead of employing address to disconcert the plans, or to soothe the spirits of the Mexicans, he waited the return of one of their solemn festivals, when the principal persons in the empire were dancing, according to custom, in the court of the great temple; he seized all the avenues which led to it, and, allured partly by the rich ornaments worn by them in honour of their gods, and partly by the facility of cutting off, at once, the authors of that conspiracy which he dreaded, he fell upon



them unarmed and unsuspecting of any danger, and massacred a great number; none escaping but those who made their way over the battlements of the temple. An action so cruel and treacherous, filled not only the city, but the whole empire with indignation and rage. All called aloud for vengeance; and, regardless of the safety of their monarch, whose life was at the mercy of the Spaniards, or of their own danger in assaulting an enemy who had been so long the object of their terror, they committed all those acts of violence, of which Cortes received an account.

To him, the danger appeared so imminent, as to admit neither of deliberation nor delay. He set out instantly with all his forces, and returned from Zempoala, with no less rapidity than he had advanced. At Tlascala, he was joined by two thousand chosen warriors. On entering the Mexican territories, he found that disaffection to the Spaniards was not confined to the capital. The principal inhabitants had deserted the towns through which he passed; no person of note appearing to meet him with the usual respect; no provision was made for the subsistence of his troops; and, though he was permitted to advance without opposition, the solitude and silence which reigned in every place, and the horror with which the people avoided all intercourse with him, discovered a deep-rooted antipathy, that excited a just alarm. But, implacable as was the enmity of the Mexicans, they were so unacquainted with the science of war, that they knew not how to take the proper measures, either for their own safety or the destruction of the Spaniards. Uninstructed by their former error in admitting a formidable enemy into their capital, instead of breaking down the causeways and bridges, by which they might have enclosed Alvarado and his party, and have effectually stopped the career of Cortes, they again suffered him to march into the city without molestation, and to take quiet possession of his ancient station.

The transports of joy with which Alvarado and his soldiers received their companions, cannot be expressed. Both parties were so much elated, the one with their seasonable deliverance, the other with the great exploits which they had achieved, that this intoxication of success seems to have reached Cortes himself; and he behaved on this occasion neither with his usual sagacity nor attention. He not only neglected to visit Montezuma, but embittered the insult by



expressions full of contempt for that unfortunate prince and his people.

The Mexicans resumed their arms, with additional fury; attacked a considerable body of Spaniards, who were marching towards the great square in which the public market was held; and compelled them to retire, with some loss. Emboldened by this success, and delighted to find that their oppressors were not invincible, they advanced the next day, with extraordinary martial pomp, to assault the Spaniards in their quarters. Their number was formidable, and still more their undaunted courage. Though the artillery pointed against their numerous battalions, crowded together in narrow streets, swept off multitudes at every discharge; though every blow of the Spanish weapons fell with mortal effect upon their naked bodies, the impetuosity of the assault did not abate. Fresh men rushed forward, to occupy the places of the slain, and, meeting with the same fate, were succeeded by others, no less intrepid and eager for revenge. The utmost effort of the abilities and experience of Cortes, seconded by the disciplined valour of his troops, was hardly sufficient to defend the fortifications, that surrounded the post where the Spaniards were stationed, into which the enemy were more than once on the point of forcing their way.

Cortes beheld, with wonder, the implacable ferocity of a people, who seemed at first to submit tamely to the yoke, and had continued so long passive. Some immediate and extraordinary effort was requisite, to extricate himself from his present situation. As soon as the approach of evening induced the Mexicans to retire, in compliance with their national custom of ceasing from hostilities with the setting sun, Cortes began to prepare for a sally the next day, with so considerable a force, as might either drive the enemy out of the city, or compel them to listen to terms of accommodation.

He conducted, in person, the troops destined for this important service. Every invention known in the European art of war, as well as every precaution, suggested by his long acquaintance with the Indian mode of fighting, was employed to ensure success. But he found an enemy prepared and determined to oppose him. The force of the Mexicans was greatly augmented by fresh troops, which poured in continually from the country, and their animosity was in no degree abated. They were led by their nobles, inflamed by the exhortations of their priests, and fought in defence of their

temples and families, under the eye of their gods, and in presence of their wives and children. Some threw themselves under the very cannon, and assaulted the artillerists with incredible resolution, using their instruments pointed with flint to break the gates, and tear down the walls: some mounted upon their companions' shoulders, to enable them to reach the desired object with their weapons; others made ladders of their own lances and pikes, to gain the terraces and windows; and all exposed themselves to fire and sword, like men wholly regardless of life, and striving only for the salvation of their country. Yet, notwithstanding their numbers, and their enthusiastic contempt of danger and death, wherever the Spaniards could close with them, the superiority of their discipline and arms obliged the Mexicans to give way. But, in narrow streets, and where many of the bridges of communication were broken down, the Spaniards could seldom come to a fair rencounter with the enemy, and as they advanced, were exposed to showers of arrows and stones from the tops of the houses. After a day of incessant exertion, though vast numbers of the Mexicans fell, and part of the city was burned, the Spaniards, weary with the slaughter, and harassed by multitudes which successively relieved each other, were obliged at length to retire, with the mortification of having accomplished nothing so decisive as to compensate the unusual calamity of having twelve soldiers killed, and above sixty wounded. Another sally, made with greater force, was not more effectual, and in it, the general himself was wounded in the hand.

Cortes now perceived, too late, the fatal error into which he had been betrayed by his own contempt of the Mexicans, and was satisfied that he could neither maintain his present station in the centre of a hostile city, nor retire from it without the most imminent danger. One resource still remained; to try what effect the interposition of Montezuma might have, to soothe or overawe his subjects. When the Mexicans approached the next morning, to renew the assault, that unfortunate prince, at the mercy of the Spaniards, and reduced to the sad necessity of becoming the instrument of his own disgrace, and of the slavery of his people, advanced to the battlements, in his royal robes, and with all the pomp in which he used to appear on solemn occasions. At the sight of their sovereign, the weapons dropped from their hands, every tongue was silent, all bowed their heads, and many prostrated them-

selves on the ground. Montezuma addressed them with every argument that could mitigate their rage, or persuade them to cease from hostilities. "I am so far, my vassals," said he, "from looking upon this expression of your zeal as a crime, that I cannot deny my inclination to excuse you. It was, indeed, an excess, to take up arms without my leave; but it was an excess of your fidelity and love. You believed, and not without some appearance of reason, that I was detained by violence in this palace of my ancestors; and, to relieve your sovereign from duress, is too great an enterprise to be attempted without some disorder. But no laws are sufficient, to restrain an excess of resentment and grief, within the bounds of prudence and moderation; and, notwithstanding that the cause of the commotion is with small foundation, since I am without any degree of violence amongst these foreigners, whom you treat as enemies, I now see that your design is good, though you err in your manner of proceeding. It is by my own voluntary option, that I have continued with them; and I thought myself obliged to show them this favour, on account of the respect which they have always shown to me, and out of duty to the prince who sends them. They are now dismissed: I have now resolved that they shall depart from my court, and they are preparing immediately to quit the country. But it is not reasonable, that I should be sooner obeyed by them, than by you, who are my natural subjects; nor that their courtesy should appear greater than your duty. Lay down your arms, and come to my presence as you ought, that, all tumults and disturbance ceasing, you may be convinced how much you are in my favour, by the readiness with which I will give you my pardon."

When Montezuma had ended his discourse, a sullen murmur of disapprobation ran through the people. To this, succeeded reproaches and threats: they exclaimed, that he was no longer their king; and that he should quit the diadem and sceptre, for the distaff and spindle; that he was an effeminate coward, an abject, a vile prisoner, and a slave to his enemies; and the fury of the multitude rising in a moment above every restraint of decency or respect, flights of arrows and volleys of stones poured in so violently upon the ramparts, that, before the Spanish soldiers, appointed to cover Montezuma with their bucklers, had time to lift them in his defence, two arrows wounded the unhappy monarch, and the blow of a stone on his temple struck him senseless to the ground.



On seeing him fall, the Mexicans were so much astonished, that, with a transition not uncommon in popular tumults, they passed in a moment from one extreme to the other, remorse succeeded to insult, and they fled with horror; as if the vengeance of Heaven were pursuing the crime which they had committed. The Spaniards, without molestation, carried Montezuma to his apartments, and Cortes hastened thither to console him under his misfortune. But the unhappy monarch scorned to survive this last humiliation, and to protract an ignominious life, not only as the prisoner and tool of his enemies, but as an object of contempt or detestation amongst his subjects. In a transport of rage, he tore the bandages from his wounds, and refused, so obstinately, to take any nourishment, that he soon ended his wretched days, rejecting with disdain all the solicitations of the Spaniards to embrace the Christian faith. Cortes was not deficient in the respect due to the remains of the unhappy monarch. His first care was to assemble all the servants of the deceased emperor, of whom he chose six of the most honourable stations, to carry the body into the city; in which number, were comprehended some priests who had been taken prisoners, all of them eye-witnesses of his wounds and death. The people received the body with becoming reverence. They showed, both in the adorning of it, and in the funeral pomp, that they were concerned at his disastrous death, and considered it as an accident undesigned; or perhaps, by that exterior indication of respect, they thought either to appease or to deceive their gods. They conveyed it, the next morning, with great solemnity, and with a numerous attendance, to the mountain of Chapultepec, where they were accustomed to perform the exequies, and to preserve the ashes of their kings; and on this occasion, the outcries and lamentations of the multitude, resounded with more than ordinary force, as they themselves afterwards acknowledged; looking upon those honours which they had shown to the manes of their deceased king, as an act of atonement, and a substantial expiation of their crime.

On the death of Montezuma, Cortes, having lost all hope of bringing the Mexicans to an accommodation, began to prepare for a retreat. But a sudden motion of the Mexicans engaged him in new conflicts. They took possession of a high tower in the great temple which overlooked the Spanish quarters, and, placing there five-hundred of their principal warriors, not a Spaniard could stir, without being exposed to their



missile weapons. From this post, it was necessary to dislodge them, at any risk; and Juan de Escobar, with a numerous detachment of chosen soldiers, was ordered to make the attack. But Escobar, though a gallant officer, was thrice repulsed. Cortes, sensible that not only the reputation, but the safety of his army, depended on the success of this assault, ordered a buckler to be tied to his arm, as he could not manage it with his wounded hand, and rushed with his drawn sword into the thickest of the combatants. Encouraged by the presence of their general, the Spaniards returned to the charge with such vigour, that they gradually forced their way up the steps, and drove the Mexicans to the platform at the top of the tower. There, a dreadful carnage began, when two young Mexicans of high rank, observing Cortes as he animated his soldiers by his voice and example, resolved to sacrifice their own lives, in order to cut off the author of all the calamities which desolated their country. They approached him in a suppliant posture, as if they intended to lay down their arms, and, seizing him in a moment, hurried him towards the battlements, over which they threw themselves headlong, in hopes of dragging him along, to be dashed to pieces by the same fall. But Cortes, by his strength and agility, broke loose from their grasp, and the gallant youths perished in this generous, though unsuccessful attempt, to save their country. As soon as the Spaniards became masters of the tower, they set fire to it, and, without farther molestation, continued the preparations for their retreat.

This became the more necessary, as the Mexicans were so much astonished at the last effort of the Spanish valour, that they began to change their whole system of hostility, and, instead of incessant attacks, endeavoured, by barricading the streets, and breaking down the causeways, to cut off the communication of the Spaniards with the continent, and thus to starve an enemy whom they could not subdue. The Spaniards began to retreat towards midnight, in three divisions. Sandoval led the van; Pedro Alvarado, and Velasquez de Leon, had the conduct of the rear; and Cortes commanded in the centre, where he placed the prisoners, amongst whom, were a son and two daughters of Montezuma, together with several Mexicans of distinction, the artillery, the baggage, and a portable bridge of timber, intended to be laid over the breaches in the causeway. They marched in profound silence along the causeway which led to Tacuba, because it was

shorter than any of the rest, and lying most remote from the road towards Tlascala and the sea-coast, had been left more entire by the Mexicans. They reached the first breach in it without molestation, hoping that their retreat was undiscovered. But the Mexicans, unperceived, had not only watched all their motions with attention, but had made proper dispositions for a most formidable attack. While the Spaniards were intent on placing their bridge in the breach, and occupied in conducting their horses and artillery along it, they were suddenly alarmed with a tremendous sound of warlike instruments, and a general shout from an innumerable multitude of enemies; the lake was covered with canoes; flights of arrows and showers of stones poured in upon them from every quarter; the Mexicans rushing forward to the charge with fearless impetuosity, as if they hoped in that moment to be avenged for all their wrongs. Unfortunately, the wooden bridge, by the weight of the artillery, was wedged so fast into the stones and mud, that it was impossible to remove it. Dismayed at this accident, the Spaniards advanced with precipitation towards the second breach. The Mexicans hemmed them in on every side, and, though they defended themselves with their usual courage, yet, crowded together as they were on a narrow causeway, their discipline and military skill were of little avail, nor did the obscurity of the night permit them to derive great advantage from their fire-arms, or the superiority of their other weapons. All Mexico was now in arms. Fresh warriors instantly filled the places of those who fell. The Spaniards, weary with slaughter, and unable to sustain the weight of the torrent that poured in upon them, began to give way. In a moment, the confusion was universal; horse and foot, officers and soldiers, friends and enemies, were mingled together; and while all fought, and many fell, they could hardly distinguish from what hand the blow came.

Cortes, with about a hundred foot soldiers and a few horse, forced his way over the two remaining breaches in the causeway, the bodies of the dead serving to fill up the chasms, and reached the main land. Having formed them as soon as they arrived, he returned with such as were yet capable of service, to assist his friends in their retreat, and to encourage them, by his presence and example, to persevere in the efforts requisite to effect it. He met with a part of his soldiers, who had broken through the enemy, but found many more overwhelmed by the multitude of their aggressors, or perish-

ing in the lake ; and heard the piteous lamentations of others, whom the Mexicans, having taken alive, were carrying off in triumph to be sacrificed to the god of war. The anguish of mind now suffered by Cortes, it is impossible even to conceive. He willingly hazarded his own life to rescue his captive friends from the horrible death which they were doomed to suffer. But, having rather inconsiderately advanced before the rest of his troops, he suffered himself to be too impetuously hurried away, by the fire which animated his fearless breast, and when he at length allowed himself to reflect upon the imminent danger of his situation, he perceived that he could not retire, in consequence of a numerous throng of the flying enemy meeting him in his retreat. Thus circumstanced, he resolved to attempt forcing his way through another street, hoping that he should there meet less opposition. He had proceeded only a few paces, when he found himself amongst a confused body of Indians, who were dragging along his intimate friend, Andres de Duero, whom they had taken prisoner by the unlucky stumbling of his horse, and who, to avoid being hacked to pieces, passively suffered himself to be led away to the sacrifice. Cortes intrepidly charged that disorderly convoy. Breaking through the foremost, he trampled under his horse's feet, all who stood in his way, affording his friend an opportunity to disengage himself from those who held him, and to use a dagger, which they had overlooked when they disarmed him. With this, he opened a way, by the deaths of several of the enemy, so far as to recover his lance and horse, when, the two friends joining, they passed through the street at a full gallop, oversetting whole droves of their opposers, until they reached their troops.

Before day, all who had escaped assembled at Tacuba. The morning dawn discovered to the view of Cortes his shattered battalion, reduced to less than half its number, the survivors dejected, and most of them covered with wounds.

In this fatal retreat, many officers of distinction perished, and amongst these, Velasquez de Leon ; who retreated with the very last of the rear guard, and on account of his extraordinary merit, was respected as the second person in the army. All the artillery, ammunition, and baggage, were lost ; the greater part of the horses, and above two-thousand Tlascalans, were killed, and only a very small portion of the treasure which they had amassed was saved.

The first care of Cortes was to find some shelter for his



wearied troops; for, as the Mexicans infested them on every side, and the people of Tacuba began to take arms, he could not continue in his present station. He directed his march towards the rising ground, and having fortunately discovered a temple situated on an eminence, took possession of it. In this sacred edifice, dedicated to the sylvan deities, or idols of the woods, to which the Indians offered the first-fruits of their harvests, he found not only the shelter for which he wished, but, what was not less wanted, some provisions to refresh his men; and, though the enemy did not intermit their attacks throughout the day, they were with less difficulty prevented from making any impression. During this time, Cortes was engaged in deep consultation with his officers, concerning the route which they ought to take in their retreat. They were now on the west side of the lake. Tlascala, the only place where they could hope for a friendly reception, lay about sixty-four miles to the east of Mexico; so that they were obliged to go round the north end of the lake, before they could fall into the road which led thither. A Tlascalan soldier undertook to be their guide, and conducted them through a country, in some places marshy, in others mountainous, in all ill-cultivated and thinly peopled. They marched for six days, with little respite, and under continual alarms, numerous bodies of the Mexicans hovering around them, sometimes harassing them at a distance with their missile weapons, and sometimes attacking them closely in front, in rear, in flank, with great boldness, as they now knew that they were not invincible. Nor were the fatigue and danger of those incessant conflicts the worst evils to which they were exposed. They were under the necessity of having recourse for sustenance, to the herbs and roots of the field, without examining whether they were poisonous or harmless; although the Spaniards, who were the most prudent, governed themselves by the knowledge and example of the Tlascalans. One of the wounded horses died, and the occasion which they had of his services in the army was joyfully forgotten; for his flesh was divided, as a particular luxury, amongst those who were in the greatest want, who celebrated the feast by inviting their best friends to partake of that dainty food.

Amidst their complicated distresses, one circumstance supported and animated the Spaniards. Their commander sustained this sad reverse of fortune with unshaken magnanimity. His presence of mind never forsook him; his sagacity



foresaw every event, and his vigilance provided for it ; he was foremost in every danger, and endured every hardship with cheerfulness.

On the sixth day, they arrived near Otumba, not far from the road between Mexico and Tlascala. Early next morning, they began to advance towards it, flying parties of the enemy still hanging on their rear ; and, amidst the insults with which they accompanied their hostilities, Marina remarked that they often exclaimed with exultation, " Go on, robbers ; go to the place where you shall quickly meet the vengeance due to your crimes." The meaning of this threat, the Spaniards did not comprehend, until they reached the summit of an eminence before them. There, a spacious valley opened to their view, covered with a vast army, extending as far as the eye could reach. The Mexicans, while with one body of their troops they harassed the Spaniards in their retreat, had assembled their principal force on the other side of the lake ; and, marching along the road which led directly to Tlascala, posted it in the plain of Otumba, through which they knew Cortes must pass. At the sight of this incredible multitude, which they could survey at once from the rising ground, the Spaniards were astonished, and even the boldest began to despair. But Cortes, without allowing leisure for their fears to acquire strength by reflection, led them instantly to the charge. The Mexicans waited their approach with unusual fortitude. So great, however, was the superiority of the Spanish discipline and arms, that the impression of this small body was irresistible ; and whichever way its force was directed, it penetrated and dispersed the most numerous battalions. But while these gave way in one quarter, new combatants advanced from another, and the Spaniards, though successful in every attack, were ready to sink under those repeated efforts, without seeing any end of their toil, or any hope of victory. At that time, Cortes observed the great standard of the empire, which was carried before the Mexican general, advancing ; and fortunately recollecting to have heard, that on the fate of it depended the event of every battle, he assembled a few of his bravest officers, whose horses were still capable of service, and, placing himself at their head, pushed forward towards the standard, with an impetuosity which bore down every thing before it. A chosen body of nobles, who guarded the standard, made some resistance, but were soon broken. Cortes, with a stroke of his lance,

wounded the Mexican general, and threw him to the ground. Juan de Salamanca alighting, put an end to his life, and laid hold of the imperial standard. The moment that their leader fell, and the standard, towards which all directed their eyes, disappeared, a universal panic struck the Mexicans, every ensign was lowered, each soldier threw away his weapons, and all fled with precipitation to the mountains.

The next day, July 8th, the Spaniards entered the Tlascalan territories.

Some interval of tranquillity and indulgence was now absolutely necessary, that the Spaniards might attend to the cure of their wounds, and recruit their strength. The army remained three days in a town called Gualipar, where they were liberally supplied with every thing that was required, at the expense of the Tlascalan republic. At the expiration of that time, the wounded being in some degree recovered, Cortes prepared to march for Otumba. On this occasion the Spaniards put on all their finery, adorning themselves with the jewels and plumes of the vanquished Mexicans; an ostentatious display, which gives importance to victory. When they approached Otumba, the caziques and ministers of state, clad in their richest robes, and accompanied by a numerous attendance of their relations, came out of the city, to receive the army. The roads were covered with people, the air was filled with acclamations of popular applause, and nothing was heard but the praises of the victors, and reproaches upon the Mexicans. On their entrance into Otumba, they were entertained with the sounds of kettle-drums, flutes, and winding-horns, distributed into several bands, which succeeded each other in endeavouring to produce pacific harmony, with their rude instruments of warlike music.

The same evening, they began their festival of the triumph; which continued for several days; the Indians all employing their utmost address to divert their guests. They had shooting-matches, and rewards were given to the best marksmen. They contended also in the exercises of leaping and running, and spent the evenings in the diversion of "the elastic cord;" but the show always ended with balls and certain dances in masquerade.

The sincerity and good deportment of these people, fulfilled all the hopes of Cortes. The nobles were friendly and respectful; the common people passionately fond, and submissively obedient. Cortes expressed a grateful sense of

their affection, commended their diversions; caressing some, and honouring others with his confidence. His officers assisted him in the gaining of friends, by their courtesy and presents; and even the humblest of his soldiers endeavoured to make themselves beloved, by generously sharing with the Tlascalans the jewels and other spoils taken by them in the battle. But, in the height of this felicity, an accident happened, which threw a damp over all their joy. A severe wound in the head, which Cortes had received in the disastrous evacuation of Mexico, and which had been only imperfectly healed, appeared afresh, with unfavourable symptoms; and the too great exercise in which he had indulged on these days of rejoicing, caused an inflammation in his brain, with a strong fever, which reduced him to such a state, that his life was considered in danger. An indescribable alarm pervaded the breast of every Spaniard; and not an Indian was to be seen in Otumba, that did not appear sunk into inconsolable grief. The senate sent for all the best physicians of the country. Their skill consisted in the knowledge and choice of medicinal herbs, which they applied with a wonderful discernment of their qualities and effects; and, in a little time, they healed the wound, and restored him to his perfect health.

In the mean time, Cortes learned that he and his companions were not the only Spaniards who had felt the effects of the Mexican enmity. A considerable detachment, which was marching from Zempoala towards the capital, had been cut off by the people of Tepeaca. A smaller party, returning from Tlascala to Vera Cruz, with the share of the Mexican gold allotted to the garrison, had been surprised and destroyed in the mountains. At a juncture when the life of every Spaniard was of importance, such losses were deeply felt. The schemes which Cortes was meditating rendered them peculiarly afflicting. While his enemies, and even many of his own followers, considered the disasters which had befallen him, as fatal to the progress of his arms; and imagined that nothing now remained, but speedily to abandon a country which he had invaded with unequal force, his mind, as eminent for perseverance as for enterprise, was still bent on accomplishing his original purpose, of subjecting the Mexican empire to the crown of Castile. Full of this idea, he had courted the Tlascalan chiefs with so much attention, and so liberally distributed amongst them the rich spoils of Otumba, that he was now certain of obtaining whatever he



should require from the republic. He drew a small supply of ammunition, and two or three field-pieces, from his stores at Vera Cruz. He despatched an officer of confidence with four ships of Narvaez's fleet to Hispaniola and Jamaica, to engage adventurers, and to purchase horses and military stores. As he knew that it would be vain to attempt the reduction of Mexico, unless he could secure the command of the lake, he gave orders to prepare, in the mountains of Tlascalala, materials for building twelve brigantines, so as they might be carried thither in pieces, ready to be put together, and launched when he stood in need of their service.

But while, with provident attention, he was taking those necessary steps towards the execution of his measures, an obstacle arose, in a quarter where it was least expected. The spirit of discontent and mutiny broke out in his own army. Many of Narvaez's followers were planters, rather than soldiers, and had accompanied him to New Spain, with sanguine hopes of obtaining settlements, but with little inclination to engage in the hardships and dangers of war. As soon as they discovered the intention of Cortes, they began secretly to murmur and cabal, and, becoming gradually more audacious, they, in a body, offered a remonstrance to their general, against the imprudence of attacking a powerful empire with his shattered forces, and formally required him to lead them back directly to Cuba. Though Cortes, long practised in the arts of command, employed arguments, intreaties, and presents, to convince or to soothe them; though his own soldiers, animated with the spirit of their leader, warmly seconded his endeavours; he found their fears too violent and deep-rooted to be removed, and the utmost he could effect, was to prevail with them to defer their departure for some time, on a promise that he would, at a more proper juncture, dismiss those who should desire it.

That the malecontents might have no leisure to brood over the causes of their disaffection, he resolved instantly to call forth his troops into action. He proposed to chastise the people of Tepeaca for the outrage which they had committed, and, as the detachment which they had cut off, happened to be composed mostly of soldiers who had served under Narvaez, their companions, from the desire of vengeance, engaged the more willingly in this war. He took the command in person, accompanied by a numerous body of Tlascalans, and in the space of a few weeks, after



various encounters, with great slaughter of the Tepeacans, reduced that province to subjection.

All his preparatory arrangements, however, would have been of little avail, without a reinforcement of Spanish soldiers. Of this, he was so deeply sensible, that it was the chief object of his thoughts and wishes; and yet his only prospect of obtaining it from the return of the officer whom he had sent to the isles to solicit aid, was both distant and uncertain. But what could have been procured neither by his own sagacity nor power, he owed to a series of fortunate and unforeseen incidents. The governor of Cuba, to whom the success of Narvaez appeared an event of infallible certainty, having sent two small ships after him with new instructions, and a supply of men and military stores, the officer whom Cortes had appointed to command on the coast, artfully decoyed them into the harbour of Vera Cruz, seized the vessels, and easily persuaded the soldiers to follow the standard of a more able leader than him whom they were destined to join. Soon afterwards, three ships of more considerable force came into the harbour. These belonged to an armament fitted out by Francisco de Garay, governor of Jamaica, and, as if the spirit of revolt had been contagious in New Spain, they likewise abandoned the master whom they were bound to serve, and enlisted under Cortes.

From those various quarters, the army of Cortes was augmented with a-hundred-and-eighty men, and twenty horses. The first effect of the junction with his new followers, was to enable him to dismiss such of Narvaez's soldiers as remained with reluctance in his service. After their departure, he still mustered five-hundred-and-fifty infantry; of which eighty were armed with muskets or cross-bows—forty horsemen, and a train of nine field-pieces. At the head of these, accompanied by ten thousand Tlascalans and other friendly Indians, Cortes began his march towards Mexico, on the twenty-eighth of December, six months after his disastrous retreat.

Nor did he advance to attack an enemy unprepared to receive him. On the death of Montezuma, the Mexican chiefs, in whom the right of electing the emperor was vested, had instantly raised his brother Quetlavaca to the throne. His avowed and inveterate enmity to the Spaniards, would have been sufficient to gain their suffrages, although he had been less distinguished for courage and capacity. He had an im-

mediate opportunity of showing that he was worthy of their choice, by conducting, in person, those fierce attacks which compelled the Spaniards to abandon his capital; and, as soon as their retreat afforded him any respite from action, he took measures for preventing their return to Mexico, with prudence equal to the spirit which he had displayed in driving them out. He repaired what the Spaniards had ruined in the city, and strengthened it with such new fortifications, as the skill of his subjects was capable of erecting. Besides filling his magazines with the usual weapons of war, he gave directions to make long spears, headed with the swords and daggers taken from the Spaniards, in order to annoy the cavalry. He summoned the people, in every province of the empire, to take arms against their oppressors, and as encouragement to exert themselves with vigour, he promised them exemption from all the taxes which his predecessors had imposed.

But while Quetlavaca was arranging his plan of defence, with a degree of foresight uncommon in an Indian, his days were cut short by the small pox. This distemper, which raged at that time in New Spain with fatal malignity, was unknown in that quarter of the globe, until it was introduced by the Europeans, and may be reckoned amongst the greatest calamities brought upon them by their invaders. In his stead, the Mexicans raised to the throne, Guatimozin, a nephew and son-in-law of Montezuma, a young man of so high reputation for abilities and valour, that in this dangerous crisis, his countrymen, with one voice, called him to the supreme command.

1521. As soon as Cortes entered the enemy's territories, he discovered various preparations to obstruct his progress. But his troops forced their way with little difficulty, and took possession of Tezeuco, the second city of the empire, situated on the banks of the lake, about twenty miles from Mexico. Here, he determined to establish his head-quarters, as the most proper station for launching his brigantines, as well as for making his approaches to the capital.

As the preparations for constructing the brigantines advanced slowly, under the unskilful hands of soldiers and Indians, whom Cortes was obliged to employ in assisting three or four carpenters who happened fortunately to be in his service; and as he had not yet received the reinforce-

ment which he expected from Hispaniola; he was not in a condition to turn his arms directly against the capital. Three months elapsed, before the materials for the brigantines were finished, and before he heard any thing with respect to the success of the officer whom he had sent to Hispaniola. This, however, was not a season of inaction to Cortes. He attacked successively several of the towns situated around the lake; and, though all the Mexican power was exerted to obstruct his operations, he either compelled them to submit to the Spanish crown, or reduced them to ruins. The inhabitants of other towns he endeavoured to conciliate by more gentle means, and, though he could not hold any intercourse with them but by the intervention of interpreters, yet, under all the disadvantage of that tedious and imperfect mode of communication, he had acquired so thorough a knowledge of the state of the country, as well as of the dispositions of the people, that he conducted his negotiations and intrigues with astonishing dexterity and success. By offering to deliver them from the odious dominion of the Mexicans, and by liberal promises of more indulgent treatment, if they would unite with him against their oppressors, he prevailed on the people of several considerable districts, not only to acknowledge the king of Castile as their sovereign, but to supply the Spanish camp with provisions, and to strengthen his army with auxiliary troops.

While, by those various methods, Cortes was gradually circumscribing the Mexican power, in such a manner that his prospect of overturning it seemed neither to be uncertain nor remote, all his schemes were nearly defeated, by a conspiracy, no less unexpected than dangerous. But his accustomed circumspection and energy, enabled him to dissolve this treacherous combination, and, as the most effectual means of preventing the return of a mutinous spirit, he determined to call forth his troops immediately to action. Fortunately, a proper occasion for this occurred, without his seeming to court it. He received intelligence that the materials for building the brigantines were at length completely finished, and waited only for a body of Spaniards to conduct them to Tezeuco. The command of this convoy, consisting of two-hundred foot soldiers, fifteen horsemen, and two-field pieces, he gave to Sandoval, who, by the vigilance, activity, and courage which he manifested on every occasion, was growing daily in his confidence, and in the estimation of his fellow-



soldiers. The service was no less singular than important: the beams, the planks, the masts, the cordage, the sails, the iron-work, and all the infinite variety of articles requisite for the construction of thirteen brigantines, were to be carried sixty miles over land, through a mountainous country, by people who were unacquainted with the ministry of domestic animals, or the aid of machines to facilitate any work of labour. Having observed that those mountains produced trees, which afforded a kind of resin, he extracted a quantity sufficient for the careening of his barks. He was in want also of powder, but soon found materials to make it, of a very good quality; procuring sulphur, of the use of which the Indians were wholly ignorant, in a volcano discovered by Diego de Ordaz. The Tlascalans furnished eight-thousand Tamenes, an inferior order of men, destined for servile tasks, to carry the materials on their shoulders, and appointed fifteen thousand warriors to accompany and defend them. Sandoval made the disposition for their progress with great propriety, placing the Tamenes in the centre, one body of warriors in the front, another in the rear, with considerable parties to cover the flanks. To each of these, he joined some Spaniards, not only to assist them in danger, but to accustom them to regularity and subordination. A body so numerous, and so much encumbered, advanced leisurely, but in excellent order; and in some places, where it was confined by the woods or mountains, the line of march extended above six miles. Parties of Mexicans frequently appeared, hovering around them on the high grounds; but, perceiving no prospect of success, in attacking an enemy continually on his guard, and prepared to receive them, they did not venture to molest him: and Sandoval had the glory of conducting safely to Tezeuco, a convoy, on which all the future operations of his countrymen depended.

This was followed by another event, of no less moment. Four ships arrived at Vera Cruz from Hispaniola, with two-hundred soldiers, eighty horses, two battering cannon, and a considerable supply of ammunition and arms. Elevated by observing that all his preparatory schemes, either for recruiting his own army, or impairing the force of the enemy, had now produced their full effect, Cortes, impatient to begin the siege in form, hastened the launching of the brigantines. To facilitate this, he had employed a vast number of Indians, for two months, in deepening the small rivulet which runs



by Tezeuco into the lake, and in forming it into a canal, nearly two miles in length; and though the Mexicans frequently endeavoured to interrupt the labourers, or to burn the brigantines, the canal was at last completed. Some remains of this great work, are still visible; and the spot where the brigantines were built and launched, is still pointed out to strangers. On the 28th of April, all the Spanish troops, together with the auxiliary Indians, were drawn up on the banks of the canal; and with extraordinary military pomp, rendered more solemn by the celebration of the most sacred rites of religion, the brigantines were launched.

Cortes determined to attack the city from three different quarters; from Tepeaca, on the north side of the lake, from Tacuba, on the west, and from Cuyocan, towards the south. Those towns were situated on the principal causeways which led to the capital, and intended for their defence. He appointed Sandoval to command in the first, Pedro de Alvarado in the second, and Christoval de Olid in the third; allotting to each about ten-thousand Indian auxiliaries, together with an equal division of Spaniards, who, by the junction of the troops from Hispaniola, amounted now to eighty-six horsemen, and eight-hundred-and-eighteen foot soldiers; of whom, one-hundred-and-ninety-four were armed with muskets or cross-bows: each of the others carried a sword, and buckler, and lance. The train of artillery consisted of three battering cannon, and fifteen field-pieces. He reserved for himself, as the station of greatest importance and danger, the conduct of the brigantines, each armed with one of his small cannon, and manned with twenty-five Spaniards, and twelve rowers, six on each side.

*May 10.* As Alvarado and Olid proceeded towards the posts assigned them, they broke down the aqueducts erected by the ingenuity of the Mexicans for conveying water into the capital, and, by the distress to which this reduced the inhabitants, gave a beginning to their calamities. Alvarado and Olid found the towns of which they were ordered to take possession, deserted by their inhabitants, who had fled for safety to the capital, where Guatimozin had collected the chief force of his empire; as there alone he could hope to make a successful stand against the formidable enemies who were approaching to assault him.

The first effort of the Mexicans, was to destroy the fleet of brigantines, the fatal effect of whose operations they fore-

saw and dreaded. Necessity urged Guatimozin to hazard the attack ; and, hoping to supply by numbers what he wanted in force, he assembled such a multitude of canoes as covered the face of the lake. They rowed on boldly to the charge, while the brigantines, retarded by a dead calm, could scarcely advance to meet them. But, as the enemy drew near, a breeze suddenly sprang up ; in a moment, the sails were spread, the brigantines, with the utmost ease, broke through their feeble opponents, upset many canoes, and dissipated the whole armament, with so great slaughter, as convinced the Mexicans, that the progress of the Europeans in knowledge and arts rendered their superiority greater on this new element, than they had hitherto found it on land.

From that time, Cortes remained master of the lake, and the brigantines not only preserved a communication between the Spaniards in their different stations, though at considerable distance from each other, but were employed to cover the causeways on each side, and keep off the canoes, when they attempted to annoy the troops as they advanced towards the city. Cortes formed the brigantines into three divisions ; appointing one to cover each of the stations from which an attack was to be carried on against the city, with orders to second the operations of the officer who commanded there. From all the three stations, he pushed on the attack against the city with equal vigour ; but in a manner so very different from the conduct of sieges in regular war, that he himself seems afraid it would appear no less improper than singular, to persons unacquainted with his situation. Each morning his troops assaulted the barricades which the enemy had erected on the causeways, forced their way over the trenches which they had dug, and through the canals where the bridges were broken down, and endeavoured to penetrate into the heart of the city, in hopes of obtaining some decisive advantage, which might force the enemy to surrender, and terminate the war at once ; but, when the obstinate valour of the Mexicans rendered the efforts of the day ineffectual, the Spaniards retired, in the evening, to their former quarters. Thus, their toil and danger were, in some measure, continually renewed ; the Mexicans repairing in the night what the Spaniards had destroyed through the day, and recovering the posts from which they had driven them. But necessity prescribed this slow and untoward mode of operation. The number of his troops was so small that Cortes durst not,

with a handful of men, attempt to make a lodgment in a city where he might be surrounded and annoyed by so great a multitude of enemies. He adhered obstinately, for a month after the siege was opened, to the system which he had adopted. The Mexicans, in their own defence, displayed valour hardly inferior to that with which the Spaniards attacked them. On land, on water, by night and by day, one furious conflict succeeded to another. Several Spaniards were killed, more wounded, and all were ready to sink under the toils of unintermitting service, which were rendered more intolerable by the injuries of the season, the periodical rains having now set in with their usual violence.

Astonished and disconcerted by the length and difficulties of the siege, Cortes determined to make one great effort to get possession of the city, before he relinquished the plan which he had hitherto followed, and had recourse to any other mode of attack. With this view, on the 3d of July, he sent instructions to Alvarado and Sandoval to advance with their divisions to a general assault, and took the command, in person, of that posted on the causeway of Cuyocan. Animated by his presence, and the expectation of some decisive event, the Spaniards pushed forward with irresistible impetuosity. They broke through one barricade after another, forced their way over the ditches and canals, and, having entered the city, gained ground incessantly, in spite of the multitude and ferocity of their opponents. Cortes, though delighted with the rapidity of his progress, did not forget that he might still find it necessary to retreat; and, accordingly, appointed Julien de Alderete, a distinguished captain, in the troops which he had received from Hispaniola, to fill up the canals and gaps in the causeway, as the main body advanced. That officer, deeming it inglorious to be thus employed, while his companions were in the heat of action and the career of victory, neglected the important charge, and hurried on, inconsiderately, to mingle with the combatants. The Mexicans, whose military attention and skill were daily improving, no sooner observed this, than they carried an account of it to their monarch.

Guatimozin instantly discerned the consequence of the error committed by the Spaniards. He commanded the troops posted in the front, to slacken their efforts, in order to allure the Spaniards to push forward, while he despatched a large body of chosen warriors through different streets, some



by land, and others by water, towards the great breach in the causeway, which had been left open. On a preconcerted signal being given, the priest in the principal temple struck the great drum consecrated to the god of war. No sooner did the Mexicans hear its doleful solemn sound, calculated to inspire them with contempt of death and enthusiastic ardour, than they rushed upon the enemy with frantic rage. The Spaniards, unable to resist men, urged on no less by religious fury than hope of success, began to retire, at first leisurely, and with a good countenance, but, as the enemy pressed on, and their own impatience to escape increased, the terror and confusion became so general, that, when they arrived at the gap in the causeway, Spaniards and Tlascalans, horsemen and infantry, plunged in promiscuously, while the Mexicans rushed upon them fiercely from every side, their light canoes carrying them through shoals which the brigantines could not approach. In vain, did Cortes attempt to stop and rally his flying troops: fear rendered them regardless of his entreaties or commands. Finding all his endeavours to renew the combat fruitless, his next care was to save some of those who had thrown themselves into the water; but, while thus employed, with more attention to their situation than to his own, six Mexican captains suddenly laid hold of him, and were hurrying him off in triumph; and, though two of his officers rescued him at the expense of their own lives, he received several dangerous wounds, before he could break loose. Above sixty Spaniards perished in the rout; and, what rendered the disaster more afflicting, forty of these fell alive into the hands of an enemy never known to show mercy to a captive.

The approach of night, though it delivered the dejected Spaniards from the attacks of the enemy, ushered in, what was hardly less grievous, the noise of their barbarous triumph, and of the horrid festival with which they celebrated their victory. Every quarter of the city was illuminated; the great temple shone with so peculiar splendour, that the Spaniards could plainly see the people in motion, and the priests busy in hastening the preparations for the death of the prisoners. Through the gloom, they fancied that they discerned their companions by the whiteness of their skins, as they were stripped naked, and compelled to dance before the image of the god to whom they were to be offered. They heard the shrieks of those who were sacrificed, and thought



that they could distinguish each unhappy victim, by the well-known sound of his voice. Imagination added to what they really saw or heard, and augmented its horror. The most unfeeling melted into tears of compassion, and the stoutest heart trembled at the dreadful spectacle which they beheld.

The juncture required an extraordinary exertion of fortitude. The Mexicans, elated by their victory, sallied out the next morning, to attack Cortes in his quarters. But they did not rely alone on the efforts of their own arms. They sent the heads of the Spaniards whom they had sacrificed, to the leading men in the adjacent provinces; and assured them that the god of war, appeased by the blood of their invaders, which had been shed so plentifully on his altars, had declared, with an audible voice, that, in eight days time, those hated enemies should be finally destroyed, and peace and prosperity re-established in the empire.

A prediction, uttered with such confidence, and in terms so void of ambiguity, gained universal credit amongst a people prone to superstition. The zeal of the provinces, which had already declared against the Spaniards, augmented; and several which had hitherto remained inactive, took arms, with enthusiastic ardour, to execute the decree of the gods. The Indian auxiliaries who had joined Cortes, accustomed to venerate the same deities with the Mexicans, and to receive the responses of their priests with the same implicit faith, abandoned the Spaniards, as a race of men devoted to certain destruction. Even the fidelity of the Tlascalans was shaken; and the Spanish troops were left almost alone in their stations. Cortes, finding that he attempted in vain to dispel the superstitious fears of his confederates by argument, took advantage, from the imprudence of those who framed the prophecy, in fixing its accomplishment so near at hand, to give a striking demonstration of its falsity. He suspended all military operations, during the period marked out by the oracle. Under cover of the brigantines, which kept the enemy at a distance, his troops lay in safety, and the fatal term expired, without any disaster.

Many of his allies, ashamed of their own credulity, returned to their station. Other tribes, judging that the gods who had now deceived the Mexicans, had decreed finally to withdraw their protection from them, joined his standard. One of the most considerable, was the nation of the Otomies,

a fierce, untamed people ; who, in the rudest barbarity of nature, preserved their liberty amongst woods and mountains, and had hitherto continued free from subjection to the Mexican empire, without any other fortification than the sterility and misery of their country, which offered no temptations to effect their conquest. Such, was the levity of a simple people, moved by every slight impression, that, in a short time after so general a defection of his confederates, Cortes saw himself, if we may believe his own account, at the head of a hundred-and-fifty-thousand Indians. Even with so numerous an army, he found it necessary to adopt a new and more wary system of operation. Instead of renewing his attempts to become master of the city, at once, by so bold but dangerous efforts of valour as he had already tried, he made his advances gradually, and with every possible precaution against exposing his men to any calamity similar to that which they still bewailed. As the Spaniards pushed forward, the Indians regularly repaired the causeways behind them. As soon as they got possession of any part of the town, the houses were instantly levelled with the ground. Day by day, the Mexicans, forced to retire as their enemies gained ground, were hemmed in within more narrow limits. Guatimozin, though unable to stop the career of the enemy, continued to defend his capital with obstinate resolution, and disputed every inch of ground. The Spaniards not only varied their mode of attack, but, by the order of Cortes, changed the weapons with which they fought. They were again armed with the long Chinantlan spears, which they had so successfully employed against Narvaez ; and, by the firm array in which this enabled them to range themselves, they repelled, with little danger, the loose assaults of the Mexicans ; incredible numbers of them fell in the conflicts which they every day renewed. While war wasted without, famine began to consume them within the city. The Spanish brigantines, having the entire command of the lake, rendered it almost impossible to convey to the besieged any supply of provisions by water. The immense number of his Indian auxiliaries, enabled Cortes to shut up the avenues to the city by land. The stores which Guatimozin had laid up, were exhausted by the multitudes which had crowded into the capital to defend their sovereign and the temples of their gods. Not only the people, but persons of the highest rank, felt the utmost distresses of famine.

What they suffered, brought on infections and mortal distempers, the last calamity that visits besieged cities, and which filled up the measure of their woes.

But, under the pressure of so many and so various evils, the spirit of Guatimozin remained firm and unsubdued. He rejected, with scorn, every overture of peace from Cortes, and disdained the idea of submitting to the oppressors of his country, determined not to survive its ruin. The Spaniards continued their progress. At length, on the 27th of July, all the three divisions penetrated into the great square in the centre of the city, and made a secure lodgment. Three-fourths of the city were now reduced, and laid in ruins. The remaining quarter was so closely pressed, that it could not long withstand assailants, who attacked it from their new station with superior advantage, and more assured expectation of success. The part of Mexico, to which Guatimozin, with his ministers, nobles, and soldiery, had retired, was a very spacious angle of the city, the longest side defended by its bordering on the lake; the rest, lying at an inconsiderable distance from the great square of Tlateluco, being, at every avenue, fortified by a strong wall, made of huge planks and fascines, and also a broad and deep ditch, full of water.

It was very remarkable, with how much care the Mexicans at this time endeavoured to disguise their distress, and conceal the necessities under which they laboured; with what ostentation, they strove to induce the Spaniards to believe, that, notwithstanding they had no objection to overtures of peace, it was not through want of means, or courage to prosecute the war, that they were willing to accept it. They sat in public, on the works, to eat; and threw cakes of maize amongst the common people, to show that they had abundance of provisions. Occasionally, one of their chiefs sallied forth, and challenged the stoutest champion of the Spaniards to single combat: but the challenger did not long continue outside of the walls; he soon retired, as well pleased with the bravado, as he could have been with a victory, had he obtained it. One of them, indeed, advanced near the place where Cortes stood; by his personal decorations, seeming to be a person of distinction. His arms were a sword and buckler, which had belonged to one of the Spaniards who had been sacrificed. This Indian most arrogantly persisted in his defiance, to so provoking a degree, that Cortes, quite out of patience with his noise and presumptuous behaviour, ordered



his interpreter to tell him, that, if he would bring ten others like himself, he would permit that Spaniard—pointing to his page who bore his shield—to engage them all at once. The Mexican was not insensible of the contempt; but, without seeming to notice it, repeated his defiance, with still greater insolence; and the page, whose name was Juan Nunez de Mercado, a youth about sixteen years of age, supposing that this affair regarded himself, because his master had directly pointed to him, leaped over the ditch, and attacked the challenger, who stood prepared; but the page, receiving the first blow upon his shield, at the same instant gave his antagonist so bold and vigorous a thrust, that he brought him down dead upon the spot. This action was greatly applauded by the Spaniards, and admired by the enemy. Immediately after his exploit, the page returned, and threw the sword and buckler of the vanquished Mexican at the feet of his general; who was so highly pleased with such an instance of early valour, that he very warmly embraced the heroic youth, and, with his own hand, girded upon him the sword which he had so bravely won.

The Mexican nobles, solicitous to save the life of a monarch whom they revered, prevailed on Guatimozin to retire from a place where resistance was now vain, that *August 13.* he might rouse the more distant provinces of the empire to arms, and maintain there a more successful struggle with the public enemy. In order to facilitate the execution of this measure, they endeavoured to amuse Cortes with overtures of submission, that, while his attention was employed in adjusting the articles of pacification, Guatimozin might escape unperceived. But they made this attempt upon a leader of greater sagacity and discernment, than to be deceived by their arts. Suspecting their intention, and aware of what moment it was to defeat it, Cortes appointed Sandoval, the officer on whose vigilance he could most perfectly rely, to take the command of the brigantines, with strict injunctions to watch every motion of the enemy. Sandoval, attentive to the charge, observing some large canoes, crowded with people, rowing across the lake with extraordinary rapidity, instantly gave the signal to chase. Garcia de Holguin, who commanded the swiftest sailing brigantine, soon overtook them, and was preparing to fire upon the foremost canoe, which seemed to carry some person whom all the rest followed and obeyed. At once, the rowers dropped their oars, and all on



board, throwing down their arms, conjured him, with cries and tears, to forbear, as the emperor was there. Holguin eagerly seized his prize, and Guatimozin, with a dignified composure, surrendered himself into his hands. When conducted to Cortes, he appeared neither with the sullen fierceness of a barbarian, nor the dejection of a suppliant.—“I have done,” said he, addressing himself to the Spanish general, “what became a monarch. I have defended my people to the last extremity. I am now your prisoner, and ready to go whithersoever you think fit to conduct me. I have only to request that some regard be had to the honour of the empress, and to that of the women who accompany her.” He then reached out his hand to that princess, to assist her in ascending the brigantine, so perfectly composed, and free from any consternation, that, perceiving Holguin to be in some concern about the other royal canoes, he, with great sedateness of countenance, added, “You need not, sir, trouble yourself in respect to those my followers; for they will all come to die at the feet of their prince:” and, on the first signal that he made to them, they dropped the weapons from their hands, and followed the brigantine, as prisoners, in obedience to their sovereign’s command. Guatimozin, then addressing the Spanish general, said, “Why do you delay, most valiant and renowned captain, to take away my life. Prisoners of my rank are only a burthen to the conqueror. Despatch me, then, at once, and let me have at least the satisfaction of dying by your hand, since I could not obtain the happiness of losing my life in my country’s defence. Take this dagger,”—laying his hand upon one which Cortes wore—“plant it in my breast, and put an end to a life which can no longer be of use.”

As soon as the fate of their sovereign was known, the resistance of the Mexicans ceased, and Cortes took possession of that small part of the capital which yet remained undestroyed. Thus, terminated the siege of Mexico, the most memorable event in the conquest of America. It continued seventy-five days, hardly one of which passed without some extraordinary effort of one party in the attack, or of the other in the defence of a city, on the fate of which both knew depended the fortune of the empire.

The exultation of the Spaniards, on accomplishing this arduous enterprise, was at first excessive. But it was quickly damped by the cruel disappointment of those sanguine hopes, which had animated them amidst so many hardships and dan-

gers. Instead of the inexhaustible wealth which they had expected, from becoming masters of Montezuma's treasures, and the ornaments of so many temples, their rapaciousness could collect only an inconsiderable booty, amidst ruins and desolation. Aware of his impending fate, Guatimozin had ordered what remained of the riches amassed by his ancestors, to be thrown into the lake. The Indian auxiliaries, while the Spaniards were engaged in conflict with the enemy, had carried off the most valuable part of the spoil. The sum to be divided amongst the conquerors, was so small, that many of them disdained to accept of the pittance which fell to their share, and all murmured and exclaimed ; some, against Cortes and his confidants, whom they suspected of having secretly appropriated to their own use a large portion of the riches, which should have been brought into the common stock :—others, against Guatimozin, whom they had accused of obstinacy, in refusing to discover the place where he had hidden his treasure.

Arguments, intreaties, and promises, were employed, in order to soothe them, but with so little effect, that Cortes, from solicitude to check this growing spirit of discontent, committed a deed which stains the glory of all his great actions. Without regarding the former dignity of Guatimozin, or feeling any reverence for those virtues which he had displayed, he subjected the unhappy monarch, together with his chief favourite, to torture, in order to force from them a discovery of the royal treasures, which it was supposed they had concealed. Guatimozin bore whatever the refined cruelty of his tormentors could inflict, with the invincible fortitude of an Indian warrior. His fellow-sufferer, overcome by the violence of the anguish, turned a dejected eye towards his master, which seemed to implore his permission to reveal all that he knew. But the high-spirited prince, darting on him a look of authority mingled with scorn, checked his weakness, by asking, "Am I now reposing on a bed of flowers?"—Overawed by the reproach, the favourite persevered in his dutiful silence, and expired. Cortes, ashamed of a scene so horrid, rescued the royal victim from the hands of his torturers, and prolonged a life reserved for new indignities and sufferings.

The fate of the capital, as both parties had foreseen, decided that of the empire. The provinces submitted, one after another, to the conquerors. Small detachments of Spaniards, marching through them without interruption, pene-

trated, in different quarters, to the great Southern Ocean; which, according to the ideas of Columbus, they imagined would open a short as well as easy passage to the East Indies, and secure to the crown of Castile all the envied wealth of those fertile regions; and the active mind of Cortes began already to form schemes for attempting this important discovery.

He did not know, that, during the progress of his victorious arms in Mexico, the very scheme of which he began to form some idea, had been undertaken and accomplished. As this is one of the most splendid events in the history of the Spanish discoveries, and has been productive of effects particularly interesting to those extensive provinces which Cortes had now subjected to the crown of Castile, the account of its rise and progress merits a particular detail, which we reserve for the following chapter.



## CHAPTER X.

### CIRCUMNAVIGATION OF THE GLOBE, BY THE FLEET OF MAGELLAN.

FERDINAND Magalhaens, or Magellan, a Portuguese gentleman of honourable birth, having served several years in the East Indies, with distinguished valour, under the famous Albuquerque, demanded the recompense which he thought due to his services, with the boldness natural to a high spirited soldier. But, as his general would not grant his suit, and he expected greater justice from his sovereign, whom he knew to be a good judge and a generous rewarder of merit, he quitted India abruptly, and returned to Lisbon. In order to induce Emanuel to listen more favourably to his claim, he not only stated his past services, but offered to add to them by conducting his countrymen to the Molucca or Spice islands, by holding a westerly course; which he contended would be both shorter and less hazardous than that which the Portuguese then followed by the Cape of Good Hope, through the immense extent of the Eastern Ocean. This was the original and favourite project of Columbus,



and Magellan founded his hopes of success, on the ideas of that great navigator, confirmed by many observations, the result of his own naval experience, as well as that of his countrymen in their intercourse with the east. But, though the Portuguese monarchs had the merit of having first awakened and encouraged the spirit of discovery in that age, it was their destiny, in the course of a few years, to reject two grand schemes for this purpose; the execution of which would have been attended with a great accession of glory to themselves, and of power to their kingdom. In consequence of some ill-founded prejudice against Magellan, or of some dark intrigue which cotemporary historians have not explained, Emanuel would neither promise the recompense which he claimed, nor approve the scheme which he proposed; and dismissed him with a disdainful coldness. In a transport of resentment, Magellan formally renounced his allegiance to an ungrateful master, and fled to the court of Castile, where he expected that his talents would be more justly estimated. He endeavoured to recommend himself by offering to execute, under the patronage of Spain, that scheme, which he had laid before the court of Portugal, the accomplishment of which, he knew, would wound the monarch against whom he was exasperated, in the most tender part. In order to establish the justness of his theory, he produced the same arguments which he had employed at Lisbon; acknowledging, at the same time, that the undertaking was both arduous and expensive, as it could be attempted only with a squadron of considerable force, and victualled for at least two years. Fortunately, he applied to a minister who was not apt to be deterred, either by the boldness of a design, or the expense of carrying it into execution. Cardinal Ximenes, who at that time directed the affairs of Spain, discerning at once the increase of wealth and glory which would accrue to his country by the success of Magellan's proposal, listened to it with a most favourable ear. Charles V. on his arrival in his Spanish dominions, entered into the measure with no less ardour, and orders were issued for equipping a proper squadron at the public charge, of which the command was given to Magellan.

On the 10th of August, 1519, Magellan sailed from Seville, with five ships, which, according to the ideas of the age, were deemed of considerable force, though the burthen of the largest did not exceed one-hundred-and-twenty tons.



After touching at the Canaries, he stood directly south, towards the equinoctial line, along the coast of America, but was so long retarded by tedious calms, and spent so much time in searching every bay and inlet for that communication with the Southern Ocean which he wished to discover, that he did not reach the river De la Plata till the 12th of January, 1520. That spacious opening through which its vast body of water pours into the Atlantic, allured him to enter; but, after sailing up it for some days, he concluded, from the shallowness of the stream and the freshness of the water, that the desired strait was not situated there, and continued his course towards the south. On the 31st of March, he arrived in the port of St. Julian, about forty-eight degrees south of the line, where he resolved to winter. In this uncomfortable station, he lost one of his squadron, and the Spaniards suffered so much from the excessive rigour of the climate, that the crews of three of his ships, headed by their officers, rose in open mutiny, and insisted on relinquishing the visionary project of a desperate adventurer, and returning directly to Spain. This dangerous insurrection, Magellan suppressed, by an effort of courage no less prompt than intrepid, inflicting exemplary punishment on the ringleaders. With the remainder of his followers, overawed, but not reconciled to his scheme, he continued his voyage towards the south, and at length discovered, near the fifty-third degree of latitude, the mouth of a strait, which he entered, notwithstanding the murmurs and remonstrances of the people under his command. After sailing twenty days in that winding, dangerous channel, to which he gave his own name, and where one of his ships deserted him, the great Southern Ocean opened to his view, and with tears of joy he returned thanks to Heaven, for having thus far crowned his endeavours with success.

But he was still at a greater distance than he imagined, from the object of his wishes. He sailed during three months and twenty days, in a uniform direction towards the north-west, without discovering land. In this voyage, the longest that had ever been made in the unbounded ocean, he suffered incredible distress. His stock of provisions was almost exhausted, the water became putrid, the men were reduced to the shortest allowance with which it was possible to sustain life, and the scurvy began to spread amongst the crews. One circumstance alone afforded them some consolation; they enjoyed

an uninterrupted course of fair weather, with so favourable winds, that Magellan bestowed on that ocean the name of Pacific, which it still retains. When reduced to so great extremity, that they must have sunk under their sufferings, they fell in with a cluster of small but fertile islands, which afforded them so abundant refreshments, that their health was soon re-established. From these isles, which he called *De los Ladrones*, from the thievish disposition of the inhabitants, he proceeded on his voyage, and soon made a more important discovery of the islands now known by the name of the Philippines. In one of these, he became involved in an unfortunate quarrel with the natives, who attacked him with a numerous body of troops, well armed; and while he fought at the head of his men with his usual valour, he fell by the hands of those barbarians, together with several of his principal officers.

The expedition was prosecuted under other commanders. After visiting many of the smaller isles scattered in the eastern part of the Indian Ocean, they touched at the great island of Borneo, and at length landed in Tidore, one of the *Moluccas*; to the astonishment of the Portuguese, who could not comprehend how the Spaniards, by holding a westerly course, had arrived at that sequestered seat of their most valuable commerce, which they themselves had discovered by sailing in an opposite direction. There, and in the adjacent isles, the Spaniards found a people acquainted with the benefits of extensive trade, and willing to open an intercourse with a new nation. They took in a cargo of the precious spices, which are the distinguished production of those islands; and, with that, as well as with specimens of the rich commodities yielded by the other countries which they had visited, the *Victory*, which, of the two ships that remained of the squadron, was most fit for a long voyage, sailed for Europe, in the month of January, 1522, under the command of Juan Sebastian del Cano. He followed the course of the Portuguese, by the Cape of Good Hope, and, after many disasters and sufferings, he arrived at St. Lucar on the 7th of September, having sailed round the globe in the space of three years and twenty-eight days.

Though an untimely fate deprived Magellan of the satisfaction of accomplishing this great undertaking, his contemporaries, just to his memory and talents, ascribed to him, not only the honour of having formed the plan, but of having sur-

mounted almost every obstacle to its completion, and, in the present age, his name is still ranked amongst the highest in the roll of eminent and successful navigators. The naval glory of Spain now eclipsed that of every other country. By a singular felicity, she had the merit, in the course of a few years, of discovering a new continent almost as large as that part of the earth which was formerly known, and of ascertaining, by experience, the form and extent of the whole terraqueous globe.



## CHAPTER XI.

EXECUTION OF GUATIMOZIN.—DISCOVERY OF CALIFORNIA.—  
DEATH OF CORTES.

1522. At the time when Cortes was acquiring territories so extensive for his native country, and preparing the way for future conquests, it was his singular fate, not only to be destitute of any commission or authority from the sovereign whom he was so zealously and successfully serving, but to be regarded as an undutiful and seditious subject. By the influence of Fonseca, bishop of Burgos, his conduct, in assuming the government of New Spain, was declared an irregular usurpation, in contempt of the royal authority; and Christoval de Tapia received a commission, empowering him to supersede Cortes, to seize his person, to confiscate his effects, to make a strict scrutiny into his proceedings, and to transmit the result of all the inquiries carried on in New Spain, to the council of the Indies; of which, the bishop of Burgos was president. A few weeks after the reduction of Mexico, Tapia landed at Vera Cruz, with the royal mandate to strip its conqueror of his power, and to treat him as a criminal. But Fonseca had chosen a very improper instrument to wreak his vengeance on Cortes. Tapia had neither the reputation nor the talents, that suited the high command to which he was appointed. Cortes, while he publicly expressed the most respectful veneration for the emperor's authority, secretly took measures to defeat the effect of his



commission ; and, having involved Tapia and his followers in a multiplicity of negotiations and conferences, in which he sometimes had recourse to threats, but more frequently employed bribes and promises, he at length prevailed on that weak man to abandon a province which he was unworthy of governing.

But, notwithstanding the fortunate dexterity with which he had eluded this danger, Cortes was so sensible of the precarious tenure by which he held his power, that he despatched deputies to Spain, with a pompous account of the success of his arms, with further specimens of the productions of the country, and with rich presents to the emperor, as the earnest of future contributions from his new conquest ; requesting, in recompense for all his services, the approbation of his proceedings, and that he might be entrusted with the government of those dominions, which his conduct and the valour of his followers, had added to the crown of Castile. The juncture in which his deputies reached the court, was favourable. The internal commotions in Spain, which had disquieted the beginning of Charles's reign were just appeased. The public voice declared warmly in favour of his pretensions ; Charles having arrived in Spain about this time, adopted the sentiments of his subjects, with a youthful ardour ; and, notwithstanding the claims of Velasquez, and the partial representations of the bishop of Burgos, the emperor appointed Cortes captain-general and governor of New Spain.

Even before his jurisdiction received this legal sanction, Cortes ventured to exercise all the powers of a governor, and, by various arrangements, endeavoured to render his conquest a secure and beneficial acquisition to his country. He determined to establish the seat of government in its ancient station, and to raise Mexico again from its ruins ; and, having conceived high ideas concerning the future grandeur of the state of which he was laying the foundation, he began to rebuild its capital, on a plan which has gradually formed the most magnificent city in Spanish America. At the same time, he employed skilful persons to search for mines in different parts of the country, and opened some which were found to be richer than any that the Spaniards had hitherto discovered in America. He detached his principal officers into the remote provinces, and encouraged them to settle there, not only by bestowing upon them large tracts of land,



but by granting them the same dominion over the Indians, and the same right to their service, which the Spaniards had assumed in the islands.

It was not, however, without difficulty, that the Mexican empire could be entirely reduced into the form of a Spanish colony. Enraged and rendered desperate by oppression, the natives often forgot the superiority of their enemies, and ran to arms in defence of their liberties. In every contest, however, the European valour and discipline prevailed. But, fatally for the honour of their country, the Spaniards sullied the glory redounding from these repeated victories, by their mode of treating the vanquished people. After taking Guatimozin, and becoming masters of his capital, they supposed that the king of Castile entered on possession of all the rights of the captive monarch, and affected to consider every effort of the Mexicans to assert their own independence, as the rebellion of vassals against their sovereign, or the mutiny of slaves against their master. Under the sanction of those ill-founded maxims, they violated every right that should be held sacred between hostile nations. After each insurrection, they reduced the common people, in the provinces which they subdued, to the most humiliating of all conditions, that of personal servitude. Their chiefs, supposed to be more criminal, were punished with greater severity, and put to death in the most ignominious or the most excruciating mode, that the insolence or the cruelty of their conquerors could devise. In almost every district of the Mexican empire, the progress of the Spanish arms is marked with blood, and with deeds so atrocious, as disgrace the enterprising valour that conducted them to success. In the country of Panuco, sixty caziques or leaders, and four hundred nobles, were burned at one time. Nor was this shocking barbarity perpetrated in any sudden sally of rage, or by a commander of inferior note. It was the act of Sandoval, an officer whose name is entitled to the second rank in the annals of New Spain, and executed after a solemn consultation with Cortes; and, to complete the horror of the scene, the children and relations of the wretched victims were assembled, and compelled to be spectators of their dying agonies. It seems hardly possible to exceed in horror this dreadful example of severity; but it was followed by another, which affected the Mexicans still more sensibly, as it gave them a most feeling proof of their own degradation, and of the small regard which

their haughty masters retained for the ancient dignity and splendour of their state. On a slight suspicion confirmed by very imperfect evidence, that Guatimozin had formed a scheme to shake off the yoke, and excite his former subjects to take arms, Cortes, without the formality of a trial, ordered the unhappy monarch, together with the caziques of Tezeuco and Tacuba, the two persons of greatest eminence in the empire, to be hanged; and the Mexicans, with astonishment and horror, beheld this disgraceful punishment inflicted upon persons, to whom they were accustomed to look up with reverence, hardly inferior to that which they paid to the gods themselves.

Guatimozin was then about twenty-five years of age. He was well proportioned, tall, yet robust, and of so fair a complexion, that, amongst those of his own nation, he appeared like one of a different climate.

One circumstance saved the Mexicans from further consumption, perhaps from one as complete as that which had depopulated the islands. The first conquerors did not attempt to search for the precious metals in the bowels of the earth. They were neither sufficiently wealthy, to carry on the expensive works, which are requisite for opening those deep recesses, where nature has concealed the veins of gold and silver, nor sufficiently skilful to perform the ingenious operations by which those precious metals are separated from their respective ores. They were satisfied with the more simple method, practised by the Indians, of washing the earth carried down rivers and torrents from the mountains, and thus collecting the grains of native metal. The rich mines of New Spain, which have poured forth their treasures with such profusion upon every quarter of the globe, were not discovered for many years after the conquest.\* By that time, a more orderly government and police were introduced into the colony:—experience, derived from former errors, had suggested many useful and humane regulations for the protection and preservation of the Indians; and, though it then became necessary to increase the number of those employed in the mines, and they were engaged in a species of labour more pernicious to the human constitution, they suffered less hardship or diminution, than from the ill-judged, but less extensive schemes of the first conquerors.

\* The first mine was opened in 1552.

While it was the lot of the Indians to suffer, their new masters seem not to have derived any considerable wealth from their ill-conducted researches. According to the usual fate of first settlers in new colonies, it was their lot to encounter danger, and to struggle with difficulties; the fruits of their victories and toils were reserved for times of tranquillity, and reaped by successors of greater industry, but of inferior merit.

1528. Having been again charged with improper conduct in the administration of the government of Mexico, Cortes determined to repair directly to Castile, and commit himself and his cause to the justice and generosity of his sovereign. He appeared in his native country with the splendour that suited the conqueror of a mighty kingdom. He brought with him a great part of his wealth, many jewels and ornaments of great value, several curious productions of the country, and was attended by some Mexicans of the first rank, as well as by the most considerable of his own officers. The treasure brought home by Cortes, consisted of fifteen-hundred marks of wrought plate, two-hundred-thousand pesos of fine gold, and ten-thousand of inferior standard; and, amongst the jewels, was one worth forty-thousand pesos.\* His arrival in Spain removed at once every suspicion and fear that had been entertained with respect to his intentions. The emperor, having now nothing to apprehend from the designs of Cortes, received him like a person whom consciousness of his own innocence had brought into the presence of his master, and who was entitled, by the eminence of his services, to the highest marks of distinction and respect. The order of St. Jago, the title of Marquis del Valle de Guaxaca, the grant of an ample territory in New Spain, were successively bestowed upon him; and as his manners were correct and elegant, although he had passed the greater part of his life amongst rough adventurers, the emperor admitted him to the same familiar intercourse with himself, that was enjoyed by noblemen of the first rank.

But, amidst those external proofs of regard, there appeared symptoms of remaining distrust. Though Cortes earnestly solicited to be reinstated in the government of New Spain,—

\* A peso was in value about five shillings, sterling; a mark was thirteen shillings and four pence.



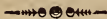
of which, he had been unjustly deprived by the jealous insinuation of his enemies—Charles, too sagacious to commit so important a charge to a man whom he had once suspected, peremptorily refused to invest him again with powers which he might find it impossible to control. Cortes, though dignified with new titles, returned to Mexico with diminished authority. The military department, with power to attempt new discoveries, was left in his hands; but the supreme direction of civil affairs was placed in a board, called The Audience of New Spain. At a subsequent period, when, upon the increase of the colony, the exertion of authority more united and extensive became necessary, Antonio de Mendoza, a nobleman of high rank, was sent thither as viceroy, to take the government into his hands.

This division of power in New Spain, proved, as was unavoidable, the source of perpetual dissension, which embittered the life of Cortes, and thwarted all his schemes. As he had no opportunity to display his active talents, except in attempting new discoveries, he formed various schemes for that purpose, all of which bear impressions of a genius that delighted in what was bold and splendid. He early entertained an idea, that, either by steering through the gulf of Florida along the east coast of North America, some strait would be found that communicated with the western ocean; or that, by examining the isthmus of Darien, some passage would be discovered between the Atlantic and the Pacific Ocean. But, having been disappointed in his expectations with respect to both, he now confined his views to such voyages of discovery as he could make from the ports of New Spain in the Pacific Ocean. There, he fitted out successively several small squadrons, which either perished in the attempt, or returned without making any discovery of moment. Weary of intrusting the conduct of his operations to others, Cortes took the command of a new armament, in person, and, after enduring incredible hardships, and encountering dangers of every species, he discovered the large peninsula of California, and surveyed the greater part of the gulf which separates it from New Spain. The discovery of a country of such extent would have reflected credit on a common adventurer; but it could add little honour to the name of Cortes, and was far from satisfying his sanguine expectations. Disgusted with ill-success, to which he had not been accus-



tomed, and weary with contesting with adversaries to whom he considered it as a disgrace to be opposed, he once more sought redress in his native country.\*

But his reception there was very different from that which gratitude, and even decency, ought to have secured. The merit of his ancient exploits was already, in a great measure, forgotten, or eclipsed by the fame of recent and more valuable conquests in another quarter of America. His grievances received no redress; his claims were urged without effect; and, after several years spent in fruitless application to ministers and judges, an occupation the most irksome and mortifying to a man of high spirit, who had moved in a sphere where he was more accustomed to command than to solicit, Cortes ended his days on the 2d of December, 1547, in the sixty-second year of his age; having experienced the same unhappy fate with that of all the persons who distinguished themselves in the discovery or conquest of the new world.



## CHAPTER XII.

### DISCOVERY AND CONQUEST OF PERU.—DEATH OF PIZARRO.

FROM the time that Balboa discovered the great Southern Ocean, and received the first obscure hints concerning the opulent countries with which it might open a communication, the wishes and schemes of every enterprising person in the colonies of Darien and Panama, were turned towards the wealth of those unknown regions.

Several armaments were fitted out, in order to explore and take possession of the countries to the east of Panama, but under the conduct of leaders whose talents and resources were unequal to the attempt. As the excursions of those adventurers did not extend beyond the limits of the province to which the Spaniards have given the name of *Tierra Firme*, a mountainous region covered with woods, thinly inhabited, and extremely unhealthy, they returned with dismal accounts concerning the distresses to which they had been exposed,

\* A. D. 1540.

and the unpromising aspect of the places which they had visited. Damped by these tidings, the rage for discovery in that direction abated; and, it became the general opinion, that Balboa had founded visionary hopes, on the tale of an ignorant Indian, ill understood, or calculated to deceive.

But there were three persons settled in Panama, on whom the circumstances which deterred others made so little impression, that at the very moment when all considered Balboa's expectations of discovering a rich country, by steering towards the east, as chimerical, they resolved to attempt the execution of his scheme. The names of those extraordinary men were Francisco Pizarro, Diego de Almagro, and Hernando Luque. Pizarro was the illegitimate son of a gentleman of an honourable family, by a very low woman, and, according to the cruel fate which often attends the offspring of unlawful love, had been so totally neglected in his youth by the author of his birth, that he seems to have destined him never to rise beyond the condition of his mother. In consequence of this ungenerous idea, he set him, when bordering on manhood, to keep hogs. But the aspiring mind of young Pizarro disdaining that ignoble occupation, he abruptly abandoned his charge, enlisted as a soldier, and, after serving some years in Italy, embarked for America, which, by opening so boundless a range to active talents, allured every adventurer whose fortune was not equal to his ambition. There, Pizarro early distinguished himself. With a temper of mind no less daring than the constitution of his body was robust, he was foremost in every danger, patient under the greatest hardships, and unsubdued by any fatigue. Though so illiterate that he could not even read, he was considered as a man formed to command. Every operation committed to his conduct proved successful, as, by a happy but rare conjunction, he united perseverance with ardour, and was as cautious in executing, as he was bold in forming his plans.

Almagro had as little to boast of his descent, as Pizarro. The one was an illegitimate son, the other a foundling. Bred, like his companion, in the camp, he yielded not to him in any of the soldierly qualities of intrepid valour, indefatigable activity, or insurmountable constancy in enduring the hardships inseparable from military service in the new world. But in Almagro these virtues were accompanied with the openness, generosity, and candour, natural to men whose profession is arms; in Pizarro, they were united with the ad-

dress, the craft, and the dissimulation of a politician, with the art of concealing his own purposes, and with sagacity to penetrate into those of other men.

Hernando de Luque was an ecclesiastic, who acted both as priest and instructor of youth at Panama, and, by means which the cotemporary writers have not described, had amassed riches that inspired him with thoughts of rising to greater eminence.

Such were the men destined to overturn one of the most extensive empires in the world. Their confederacy for this purpose was authorised by Pedrarias, the governor of Panama. Each engaged to employ his whole fortune in the adventure. Pizarro, the least wealthy of the three, as he could not contribute so large a sum as his associates, to the common stock, engaged to take the department of greatest fatigue and danger, and to command in person the armament which was to proceed first upon discovery. Almagro offered to conduct the supplies of provisions and reinforcements of troops, of which Pizarro might stand in need. Luque was to remain at Panama, to negotiate with the governor, and superintend whatever was carrying on for the general interest. As the spirit of enthusiasm uniformly accompanied that of adventure in the new world, and, by that strange union, both acquired an increase of force, this confederacy, formed by ambition and avarice, was confirmed by the most solemn act of religion. Luque celebrated mass, divided a consecrated host into three, and reserving one part for himself, gave the other two to his associates, of which they partook; and thus, in the name of the Prince of Peace, ratified a contract of which the objects were plunder and bloodshed.

The attempt was begun with a force more suited to the humble condition of the three associates, than to the greatness of the enterprise in which they were engaged. Pizarro sailed from Panama, on the 14th of November, 1524, with a single vessel, of small burthen, and a hundred-and-twelve men. But in that age, so little were the Spaniards acquainted with the peculiarities of climate in America, that the time chosen by Pizarro for his departure, was the most improper in the whole year; the periodical winds, which had then commenced, being directly adverse to the course which he purposed to steer. After beating about for seventy days, with much danger and incessant fatigue, Pizarro's progress towards the south-east was not greater than what a skilful navigator



will now make in as many hours. He touched at several places on the coast of Terra Firma, but found every where the same uninviting country which former adventurers had described; the low grounds converted into swamps by the overflowing of rivers; the higher, covered with impervious woods; few inhabitants, and those fierce and hostile. Famine, fatigue, frequent rencounters with the natives, and above all, the distempers of a moist, sultry climate, combined in wasting his slender band of followers. The undaunted resolution of their leader continued, however, for some time, to sustain their spirits, although no sign had yet appeared of discovering those golden regions to which he had promised to conduct them. At length, he was obliged to abandon that inhospitable coast, and retire to Chuchama, opposite the pearl islands, where he hoped to receive a supply of provisions and troops from Panama.

But Almagro, having sailed from that port with seventy men, stood directly towards that part of the continent where he hoped to meet his associate. Not finding him there, he landed his soldiers, who, in searching for their companions, underwent the same distresses, and were exposed to the same dangers, which had driven them out of the country. Repulsed at length by the Indians in a sharp conflict, in which their leader lost one of his eyes by the wound of an arrow, they likewise were compelled to re-embark. Chance led them to the place of Pizarro's retreat, where they found some consolation in recounting to each other their adventures, and comparing their sufferings.\* As Almagro had advanced as far as the river St. Juan, in the province of Popayan, where both the country and inhabitants appeared with a more promising aspect, that dawn of better fortune was sufficient to determine so sanguine projectors not to abandon their scheme, notwithstanding all that they had suffered in its prosecution.

Almagro repaired to Panama, in hopes of recruiting their shattered troops. But what he and Pizarro had suffered, gave his countrymen so unfavourable an idea of the service, that it was with difficulty he could levy eighty men. Feeble as this reinforcement was, Almagro took the command of it, and having joined Pizarro, they did not hesitate about resuming their operations. After a long series of disasters and disappointments, not inferior to those which they had already

\* June 24, 1526.



experienced, part of the armament reached the bay of St. Matthew, on the coast of Quito, and, landing at Tacamez, to the south of the river Emeralds, they beheld a country more champaign and fertile than any they had yet discovered in the Pacific Ocean; the natives being clad in garments of woollen or cotton stuff, and adorned with trinkets of gold and silver.

Yet, notwithstanding those favourable appearances, magnified beyond the truth, both by the vanity of the persons who brought the report from Tacamez, and by the fond imagination of those who listened to them, Pizarro and Almagro durst not venture to invade a country so populous, with a handful of men enfeebled by fatigue and diseases. They retired to the small island of Gallo, where Pizarro remained with part of the troops, and his associate returned to Panama, in hopes of bringing such a reinforcement as might enable them to take possession of the opulent territories, whose existence seemed to be no longer doubtful.

But some of the adventurers, less enterprising, or less hardy than their leaders, having secretly conveyed lamentable accounts of their sufferings and losses to their friends at Panama, Almagro met an unfavourable reception from Pedro de los Rios, who had succeeded Pedrarias in the government of that settlement. After weighing matters with that cold economical prudence which appears the first of all virtues to persons whose limited faculties are incapable of conceiving or executing great designs, he concluded that an expedition, attended with so certain a waste of men, would be so detrimental to an infant and feeble colony, that he not only prohibited the raising of new levies, but despatched a vessel to bring home Pizarro and his companions from the island of Gallo. Almagro and Luque, though deeply affected with those measures, which they could not prevent, and durst not oppose, found means of communicating their sentiments privately to Pizarro, and exhorted him not to relinquish an enterprise that was the foundation of all their hopes, and the only means of re-establishing their reputation and fortune, which were both on the decline. Pizarro's mind, bent with inflexible obstinacy on all its purposes, needed no incentive to persist in the scheme. He peremptorily refused to obey the governor of Panama's orders, and employed all his address and eloquence in persuading his men not to abandon him. But the incredible calamities to which they had been

exposed, were still so recent in their memories, and the thoughts of revisiting their families and friends after a long absence, rushed with such joy into their minds, that when Pizarro drew a line upon the sand with his sword, permitting those who wished to return home to pass over it, only thirteen of all the daring veterans in his service had resolution to remain with their commander.

This small but determined band, fixed their residence in the island of Gorgona. This, as it was farther removed from the coast than Gallo, and uninhabited, they considered as a more secure retreat, where, unmolested, they might wait for supplies from Panama, which they trusted that the activity of their associates would be able to procure. Almagro and Luque were not inattentive or cold solicitors; and their incessant importunity was seconded by the general voice of the colony, which exclaimed loudly against the infamy of exposing brave men, engaged in the public service, and chargeable with no error but what flowed from an excess of zeal and courage, to perish, like the most odious criminals, in a desert island. Overcome by those entreaties and expostulations, the governor at last consented to send a small vessel to their relief. But, that he might not seem to encourage Pizarro to any new enterprise, he would not permit one landsman to embark.

By this time, Pizarro and his companions had remained five months in an island, infamous for the most unhealthy climate in that region of America. But, on the arrival of the vessel from Panama, they were transported with such joy, that all their sufferings were forgotten. Their hopes revived, and Pizarro easily induced, not only his own followers, but the crew of the vessel from Panama, to resume his former scheme, with fresh ardour. Instead of returning to Panama, they steered towards the south-east, and, more fortunate in this than in any of their past efforts, on the twentieth day after their departure from Gorgona, they discovered the coast of Peru. After touching at several villages near the shore, which they found to be in no way inviting, they landed at Tumbez, a place of some note, about three degrees south of the line, distinguished for its stately temple, and a palace of the Incas or sovereigns of the country. There, the Spaniards feasted their eyes with the first view of the opulence and civilization of the Peruvian empire. They beheld a country fully peopled, and cultivated with an appearance of regular industry; the natives decently clothed, and possessed of in-

geniuity so far surpassing the other inhabitants of the new world, as to have the use of tame domestic animals. But, what chiefly attracted their notice, was such a show of gold and silver, not only in the ornaments of their persons and temples, but in several vessels and utensils for common use, formed of those precious metals, as left no room to doubt that they abounded with profusion in the country.

But, with the slender force then under his command, Pizarro could only view the rich country of which he hoped hereafter to obtain possession. He ranged, however, for some time along the coast, maintaining every where a peaceable intercourse with the natives, no less astonished at their new visitants, than were the Spaniards, with the uniform appearance of opulence and cultivation. Having explored the country as far as was requisite to ascertain the importance of the discovery,\* Pizarro procured from the inhabitants some of their lamas or tame cattle, to which the Spaniards gave the name of sheep; some vessels of gold and silver, as well as some specimens of their other works of ingenuity; and two young men, whom he proposed to instruct in the Castilian language, that they might serve as interpreters in his meditated expedition. With these, he arrived at Panama, towards the close of the third year from the time of his departure thence. No adventurer of the age suffered hardships or encountered dangers, equal to those to which he was exposed, during this long period. The patience with which he endured the one, and the fortitude with which he surmounted the other, exceed whatever is recorded in the history of the new world, where there occur so many romantic displays of those virtues.

Neither the splendid relation given by Pizarro respecting the incredible opulence of the country which he had discovered, nor his bitter complaints on account of that unseasonable recall of his forces, which had disabled him from attempting to make any settlement, could move the governor of Panama to swerve from his former plan of conduct. He still contended, that the colony was not in a condition to invade so mighty an empire, and refused to authorise an expedition which he foresaw would be so alluring that it might ruin the province in which he presided, by an effort beyond its strength. His coldness, however, did not in any degree

\* A. D. 1527.



abate the ardour of the three associates; but they perceived that they could not carry their scheme into execution without the countenance of superior authority, and must solicit their sovereign to grant that permission which they could not extort from his delegate. With this view, after adjusting amongst themselves that Pizarro should claim the station of governor, Almagro that of lieutenant-governor, and Luque the dignity of bishop, in the country which they purposed to conquer, they sent Pizarro, as their agent, to Spain,\* though their fortunes were now so much exhausted by their repeated efforts, that they found some difficulty in borrowing the small sum requisite towards equipping him for the voyage.

Pizarro lost no time in repairing to court, and, new as the scene might be to him, he appeared before the emperor with the unembarrassed dignity of a man conscious of what his services merited; and he conducted his negotiations with an insinuating dexterity of address, which could not have been expected either from his education or former habits of life. He made such an impression, both on Charles and his ministers, that they not only approved of the intended expedition, but seemed to be interested in the success of its leader. Presuming on those dispositions in his favour, Pizarro paid little attention to the interest of his associates. As the pretensions of Luque did not interfere with his own, he obtained for him the ecclesiastical dignity to which he aspired. For Almagro he claimed only the command of the fortress which should be erected at Tumbez. To himself, he secured whatever his boundless ambition could desire. He was appointed governor, captain-general, and adelantado of all the country which he had discovered, and hoped to conquer, with supreme authority, civil as well as military; and with full right to all the privileges and emoluments usually granted to adventurers in the new world. His jurisdiction was declared to extend two-hundred leagues along the coast to the south of the river St. Jago; to be independent of the governor of Panama; and he had power to nominate all the officers who were to serve under him. In return for those concessions, which cost the court of Spain nothing, as the enjoyment of them depended on the success of Pizarro's own efforts, he engaged to raise two-hundred-and-fifty men, and to provide the required ships, arms, and warlike stores.



Inconsiderable as was the body of men, which Pizarro had undertaken to raise, his funds and credit were so low that he could hardly complete half the number; and, after obtaining his patents from the crown, he was obliged to depart privately from the port of Seville, in order to elude the scrutiny of the officers who had it in charge to examine, whether he had fulfilled the stipulations in his contract.\* Before his departure, however, he received some supply of money from Cortes, who, having about this time returned to Spain, was willing to contribute his aid towards enabling an ancient companion, with whose talents and courage he was well acquainted, to begin a career of splendour similar to that which he himself had finished.

He landed at Nombre de Dios, and marched across the isthmus to Panama, accompanied by his three brothers, Ferdinand, Juan, and Gonzalo; of whom, the first was born in lawful wedlock, the two latter, like himself, were of illegitimate birth; and also by Francisco de Alcantara, his mother's brother.

1530. On his arrival at Panama, Pizarro found Almagro so much exasperated at the manner in which he had conducted his negotiation, that he not only refused to act any longer in concert with a man by whose perfidy he had been excluded from the power and honours to which he had a just claim, but laboured to form a new association, in order to thwart or to rival his former confederate in his discoveries. Pizarro, however, had more wisdom and address than to suffer a rupture so fatal to all his schemes, to become irreparable. By offering voluntarily to relinquish the office of adelantado, and promising to concur in soliciting that title, with an independent government, for Almagro, he gradually mitigated the rage of an open-hearted soldier, which had been violent, but was not implacable.—Luque, highly satisfied with having been successful in all his own pretensions, cordially seconded Pizarro's endeavours. A reconciliation was effected, and the confederacy renewed on its original terms, that the enterprise should be carried on at the common expense of the associates, and the profits accruing from it equally divided amongst them.

*Feb. 1531.* Even after their re-union, and the utmost efforts of their interest, three small vessels, with a hundred-and-eight soldiers, thirty-six of whom were horse-

\* 1529.

men, composed the armament which they were able to equip. But the astonishing progress of the Spaniards in America, had inspired them with such ideas of their own superiority, that Pizarro did not hesitate to sail with this contemptible force, to invade a great empire. Almagro was left at Panama, as formerly, to follow him with what reinforcement of men he should be able to muster. As the season for embarking was properly chosen, and the course of navigation between Panama and Peru was now better known, Pizarro completed the voyage in thirteen days; though, by the force of the winds and currents, he was carried above a hundred leagues to the north of Tumbez, the place of his destination, and obliged to land his troops in the bay of St. Matthew. Without losing a moment, he began to advance towards the south, taking care, however, not to depart far from the sea-shore; both that he might easily effect a junction with the supplies which he expected from Panama, and secure a retreat in case of any disaster, by keeping as near as possible to his ships. At length, they reached the province of Coaque; and, having surprised the principal settlement of the natives, they seized their vessels and ornaments of gold and silver, to the amount of thirty-thousand pesos, with other booty of so great value, as dispelled all their doubts, and inspired the most desponding with sanguine hopes.

Pizarro himself was so much delighted with this rich spoil, which he considered as the first fruits of a land abounding with treasure, that he instantly despatched one of his ships to Panama, with a large remittance to Almagro; and another to Nicaragua, with a considerable sum to several persons of influence in that province, in hopes of alluring adventurers, by this early display of wealth. Meanwhile, he continued his march along the coast, and met little resistance until he attacked the island of Puna, in the bay of Guayquil. As there, the population was more dense, than in the country through which he had passed, and the inhabitants fiercer and less civilized than those of the continent, they defended themselves with so obstinate valour, that Pizarro spent six months in reducing them to subjection. From Puna, he proceeded to Tumbez, where the distempers which raged amongst his men compelled him to remain for three months.

1532. While thus employed, he began to reap advantage from his attention to spread the fame of his success at Coaque. Two different detachments arrived from Nicaragua,

which, though neither exceeded thirty men, he considered as a reinforcement of great importance to his feeble band, especially as the one was under the command of Sebastian Benalcázar, and the other of Hernando Soto, officers not inferior in merit and reputation to any who had served in America. From Tumbez, he proceeded to the river Piura, and in an advantageous station near its mouth, he established the first Spanish colony in Peru; to which, he gave the name of St. Michael.

As Pizarro continued to advance towards the centre of the Peruvian empire, he gradually received more full information concerning its extent and policy, as well as the existing situation of its affairs. Without some knowledge of these, he could not have conducted his operations with efficiency; and, without a suitable attention to them, it is impossible to account for the progress which the Spaniards had already made, or to unfold the causes of their subsequent success.

At the time when the Spaniards invaded Peru, the dominions of its sovereigns extended in length, from north to south, above fifteen-hundred miles along the Pacific Ocean. Its breadth, from east to west, was much less considerable; being uniformly bounded by the vast ridge of the Andes, stretching from its one extremity to the other. Peru, like the rest of the new world, was originally possessed by small independent tribes, differing from each other in manners, and in their forms of rude policy. All, however, were so little civilized, that, if the traditions concerning their mode of life, preserved by their descendants, deserve credit, they must be classed amongst the most unimproved savages of America. Strangers to every species of cultivation or regular industry, without any fixed residence, and unacquainted with those sentiments and obligations which form the first bonds of social union, they are said to have roamed about naked in the forests, with which the country was then covered, more like wild beasts than like men. After they had struggled, for several ages, with the hardships and calamities which are inevitable in such a state, and when no circumstance seemed to indicate the approach of any uncommon effort towards improvement, we are told that there appeared, on the banks of the lake Titiaca, a man and woman, of majestic form, and clothed in decent garments. They declared themselves to be children of the Sun, sent by their beneficent parent, who beheld with pity the miseries of the human race, to instruct and to

reclaim them. At their persuasion, enforced by reverence for the divinity in whose name they were supposed to speak, several of the dispersed savages united together, and, receiving their commands as heavenly injunctions, followed them to Cuzco, where they settled, and began to lay the foundations of a city.

Manco Capac and Mama Ocollo, for such were the names of those extraordinary personages, having thus collected some wandering tribes, formed that social union, which, by multiplying the desires, and uniting the efforts of the human species, excites industry, and leads to improvement. Manco Capac instructed the men in agriculture, and other useful arts. Mama Ocollo taught the women to spin and weave. After securing the objects of first necessity in an infant state, by providing food, raiment, and habitations, for the rude people of whom he took charge, Manco Capac turned his attention towards introducing such laws and policy as might perpetuate their happiness. By his institutions, which shall be more particularly explained hereafter, the various relations in private life were established, and the duties resulting from them prescribed with such propriety, as gradually formed a barbarous people to decency of manners. In public administration, the functions of persons in authority were so precisely defined, and the subordination of those under their jurisdiction maintained with so steady a hand, that the society in which he presided, soon assumed the aspect of a regular and well-governed state.

Thus, according to the Indian tradition, was founded the empire of the Incas or Lords of Peru. At first, its extent was small. The territory of Manco Capac did not reach above eight leagues from Cuzco. But, within its narrow precincts, he exercised absolute and uncontrolled authority. His successors, as their dominions extended, arrogated a similar jurisdiction over the new subjects which they acquired: the despotism of Asia was not more complete. The Incas were not only obeyed as monarchs, but revered as divinities. Their blood was held to be sacred, and, by prohibiting intermarriages with the people, was never contaminated, by mixing with that of any other race. Thus separated from the rest of the nation, the family was distinguished by peculiarities in dress and ornaments, which it was unlawful for others to assume. The monarch himself appeared with ensigns of royalty reserved for him alone, and received from his subjects



marks of obsequious homage and respect, which approached almost to adoration.

When the Spaniards first visited the coast of Peru, in the year 1526, Huana Capac, the twelfth monarch from the founder of the state, was seated on the throne. He is represented as a prince distinguished not only for the pacific virtues peculiar to the race, but eminent for his martial talents. By his victorious arms, the kingdom of Quito was subjected; a conquest of so great extent and importance, as almost doubled the power of the Peruvian empire. He was fond of residing in the capital of that valuable province, which he had added to his dominions; and, notwithstanding the ancient and fundamental law of the monarchy, against polluting the royal blood by any foreign alliance, he married the daughter of the vanquished monarch of Quito. She bore him a son named Atahualpa, whom, on his death at Quito, which seems to have happened about the year 1529, he appointed his successor in that kingdom, leaving the rest of his dominions to Huascar, his eldest son, by a mother of the royal race. Greatly as the Peruvians revered the memory of a monarch who had reigned with greater reputation and splendour than any of his predecessors, the destination of Huana Capac concerning the succession, appeared so repugnant to a maxim coeval with the empire, and founded on authority deemed sacred, that it was no sooner known at Cuzco, than it excited general disgust. Encouraged by those sentiments of his subjects, Huascar required his brother to renounce the government of Quito, and to acknowledge him as his lawful superior. But it had been the first care of Atahualpa to gain a large body of troops, the flower of the Peruvian warriors, which had accompanied his father to Quito; relying on whose support, Atahualpa first eluded his brother's demand, and then marched against him in hostile array.

Thus, the ambition of two young men, involved Peru in civil war; a calamity, to which, under a succession of virtuous princes, it had hitherto been a stranger. In such a contest, the issue was obvious. The force of arms triumphed over the authority of laws. Atahualpa remained victorious, and made a cruel use of his victory. Conscious of the defect in his own title to the crown, he attempted to exterminate the royal race, by putting to death all the children of the Sun descended from Manco Capac, whom he could seize either by force or stratagem. From a political motive, the

life of his unfortunate rival, Huascar, who had been taken prisoner in a battle which decided the fate of the empire, was prolonged for some time, that, by issuing orders in his name, the usurper might more easily establish his own authority.

When Pizarro landed in the bay of St. Matthew, this civil war raged between the two brothers, in its greatest fury. The two competitors, though they received early accounts of the arrival and violent proceedings of the Spaniards, were so intent upon the operations of a war, which they deemed more interesting, that they paid no attention to the motions of an enemy, too inconsiderable in number to excite any great alarm, and to whom, it would be easy, as they imagined, to give a check when more at leisure.

By this fortunate coincidence of events, of which Pizarro could have had no foresight, he was permitted to carry on his operations unmolested, and advanced to the centre of a great empire, before one effort of its power was exerted to stop his career. During their progress, the Spaniards had acquired some imperfect knowledge of this struggle between the two contending factions. The first complete information, they received from messengers whom Huascar sent to Pizarro, in order to solicit his aid against Atahualpa, whom he represented as a rebel and a usurper. Pizarro perceived at once the importance of this intelligence, and foresaw so clearly all the advantages which might be derived from this divided state of the kingdom, that, without waiting for the reinforcement which he expected from Panama, he determined to push forward, while intestine discord put it out of the power of the Peruvians to attack him with their whole force.

As he was obliged to divide his troops, in order to leave a garrison in St. Michael, he began his march with a very slender and ill-accountred train of followers. They consisted of sixty-two horsemen, and a hundred-and-two foot-soldiers, of whom twenty were armed with cross-bows, and three with muskets. He directed his course towards Caxamalca, a small town at the distance of twelve days' march from St. Michael, where Atahualpa was encamped with a considerable body of troops. Before he had proceeded far, an officer, despatched by the Inca, met him with a valuable present from that prince, accompanied with an offer of his alliance, and assurances of a friendly reception at Caxamalca. Pi-

zarro, according to the usual artifice of his countrymen in America, pretended to come as the ambassador of a very powerful monarch, and declared that he was now advancing with an intention to offer Atahualpa his aid against those enemies who disputed his title to the throne.

The Spaniards were allowed to march in tranquillity across the sandy desert between St. Michael and Motupe, where the most feeble effort of an enemy, added to the unavoidable distresses which they suffered in passing through that comfortless region, must have proved fatal to them. From Motupe, they advanced towards the mountains which encompass the low country of Peru, and passed through a defile, so narrow and inaccessible, that a few men might have defended it against a numerous army. But here likewise, from the same inconsiderate credulity of the Inca, the Spaniards met no opposition, and took quiet possession of a fort erected for the security of that important station. As they now approached near to Caxamalca, Atahualpa renewed his professions of friendship; and, as an evidence of his sincerity, sent them presents of greater value than the former.

On entering Caxamalca, Pizarro took possession of a large court, on one side of which was a house which the Spanish historians call a palace of the Inca, and on the other a temple of the Sun; the whole surrounded with a strong rampart, or wall of earth. When he had posted his troops in this advantageous station, he despatched his brother Ferdinand, and Hernando Soto, to the camp of Atahualpa, about a league distant from the town. He instructed them to confirm a declaration which he had formerly made, of his pacific disposition, and to desire an interview with the Inca, that he might explain more fully the intention of the Spaniards in visiting his country. They were treated with all the respectful hospitality usual amongst the Peruvians, in the reception of their most cordial friends; and Atahualpa promised to visit the Spanish commander, the next day, in his quarters. The decent deportment of the Peruvian monarch, the order of his court, and the reverence with which his subjects approached his person and obeyed his commands, astonished those Spaniards, who had never met in America any thing more dignified than the petty cazique of a barbarous tribe. But their eyes were still more powerfully attracted, by the vast profusion of wealth which they observed in the Inca's camp. The rich ornaments worn by him and his attendants; the vessels of gold and sil-



ver in which the repast offered to them was served ; the multitude of utensils of every kind, formed of those precious metals ; opened prospects far exceeding any idea of opulence that a European of the sixteenth century could conceive.

On their return to Caxamalca, while their minds were yet warm with admiration and desire of the wealth which they had beheld, they gave such a description of it to their countrymen, as confirmed Pizarro in a resolution which he had already taken. From his own observation of American manners, during his long service in the new world, as well as from the advantages which Cortes had derived from seizing Montezuma, he knew of what importance it was, to have the Inca in his power. For this purpose, he formed a plan, as daring as it was perfidious. Notwithstanding the character that he had assumed of an ambassador from a powerful monarch, who courted an alliance with the Inca, and in violation of the repeated offers which he had made to him, of his own friendship and assistance, he determined to avail himself of the unsuspecting simplicity with which Atahualpa relied on his professions, and to seize the person of the Inca, during the interview to which he had been invited. He divided his cavalry into three small squadrons, under the command of his brother Ferdinand, Soto, and Benalcazar ; his infantry were formed in one body, except twenty of the most tried courage, whom he kept near his own person, to support him in the dangerous service which he reserved for himself ; the artillery, consisting of two field-pieces, and the cross-bowmen, were placed opposite to the avenue by which Atahualpa was to approach. All were commanded to keep within the square, and not to move until the signal for action was given.

*Nov. 16.* Early in the morning, the Peruvian camp was all in motion. The Inca at length approached. First, appeared four-hundred men, in a uniform dress, as harbingers, to clear the way before him. He himself sitting on a throne or couch, adorned with plumes of various colours, and almost covered with plates of gold and silver enriched with precious stones, was carried on the shoulders of his principal attendants. Behind him, came some chief officers of his court, carried in the same manner. Several bands of singers and dancers accompanied this cavalcade ; and the whole plain was covered with troops, amounting to more than thirty-thousand men.

As the Inca drew near the Spanish quarters, father Vincent



Valverde, chaplain to the expedition, advanced with a crucifix in one hand, and a breviary in the other, and, in a long discourse, explained to him the doctrine of the creation, the fall of Adam, the incarnation, the sufferings and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the appointment of St. Peter as God's vicerent on earth, the transmission of his apostolic power by succession to the popes, and the donation made to the king of Castile, by Pope Alexander, of all the regions in the new world. In consequence of all this, he required Atahualpa to embrace the Christian faith, to acknowledge the supreme jurisdiction of the pope, and to submit to the king of Castile as his lawful sovereign; promising, if he complied instantly with this requisition, that the Castilian monarch would protect his dominions, and permit him to continue in the exercise of his royal authority; but, if he should impiously refuse to obey this summons, he denounced war against him, in his master's name, and threatened him with the most dreadful effects of his vengeance.

This strange harangue, unfolding deep mysteries, and alluding to unknown facts, of which no power of eloquence could have conveyed at once a distinct idea to an Indian, was so imperfectly translated by an unskilful interpreter, little acquainted with the idiom of the Spanish tongue, and incapable of expressing himself with propriety in the language of the Inca, that its general tenor was altogether incomprehensible to Atahualpa. Some parts of it, of more obvious meaning, filled him with astonishment and indignation. His reply, however, was temperate. He began with observing, that he was lord of the dominions over which he reigned, by hereditary succession; and added, that he could not conceive how a foreign priest should pretend to dispose of territories which did not belong to him; that, if such a preposterous grant had been made, he, who was the rightful possessor, refused to confirm it; that he had no inclination to renounce the religious institutions established by his ancestors; nor would he forsake the service of the Sun, the immortal divinity whom he and his people revered, in order to worship the God of the Spaniards, who was subject to death; that with respect to other matters contained in his discourse, as he had never heard of them before, and did not now understand their meaning, he desired to know where the priest had learned things so extraordinary. "In this book," answered Valverde, reaching out to him his breviary. The Inca opened it eagerly,

and, turning over the leaves, lifted it to his ear. "This," says he, "is silent; it tells me nothing;" and threw it with disdain to the ground. The enraged monk, running towards his countrymen, cried out, "To arms, Christians, to arms; the word of God is insulted; avenge this profanation on those impious dogs!"

Pizarro, who, during this long conference, had with difficulty restrained his soldiers, eager to seize the rich spoils of which they had now so near a view, immediately gave the signal of assault. At once, the martial music sounded, the cannon and muskets began to fire, the horse sallied out fiercely to the charge, the infantry rushed on sword-in-hand. The Peruvians, astonished at the suddenness of an attack which they did not expect, and dismayed with the destructive effects of the fire-arms, and the irresistible impression of the cavalry, fled, with universal consternation, on every side, without attempting either to annoy the enemy, or to defend themselves. Pizarro, at the head of his chosen band, advanced directly towards the Inca; and, though his nobles crowded around him with officious zeal, and fell in numbers at his feet, while they vied with each other in sacrificing their own lives, that they might cover the sacred person of their sovereign, the Spaniards soon penetrated to the royal seat; and Pizarro, seizing the Inca by the arm, dragged him to the ground, and carried him as a prisoner to his quarters. The fate of the monarch increased the precipitate flight of his followers. The Spaniards pursued them in every direction, and, with deliberate and unrelenting barbarity, continued to slaughter wretched fugitives, who never once offered to resist. The carnage did not cease until the close of the day. Above four-thousand Peruvians were killed. Not a single Spaniard fell, nor was one wounded, except Pizarro himself, whose hand was slightly hurt by one of his own soldiers, while struggling eagerly to seize the Inca.

The plunder of the field was rich, beyond any idea yet formed by the Spaniards concerning the wealth of Peru; and they were so transported with the value of the acquisition, as well as the greatness of their success, that they passed the night in the extravagant exultation natural to indigent adventurers on so extraordinary a change of fortune.

At first, the captive monarch could hardly believe a calamity which he so little expected, to be real. But he soon felt all the misery of his fate; and the dejection into which

he sunk, was in proportion to the height of grandeur from which he had fallen. He offered, as a ransom, what astonished the Spaniards, even after all they now knew concerning the opulence of his kingdom. The apartment in which he was confined was twenty-two feet in length, and sixteen in breadth: he undertook to fill it with vessels of gold as high as he could reach. Pizarro eagerly acceded to this tempting proposal, and a line was drawn on the walls of the chamber, to mark the stipulated height to which the treasure was to rise.

Atahualpa, transported with having obtained some prospect of liberty, took measures instantly for fulfilling his part of the agreement, by sending messengers to Cuzco, Quito, and other places, where gold had been amassed in the largest quantities, either for adorning the temples of the gods, or the houses of the Inca, to bring what was necessary for completing his ransom, directly to Caxamalca. Though Atahualpa was now in the custody of his enemies, yet so much were the Peruvians accustomed to respect every mandate issued by their sovereign, that his orders were executed with the greatest alacrity. Soothed with the hope of recovering his liberty by this means, the subjects of the Inca were afraid of endangering his life, by forming any other scheme for his relief; and, though the force of the empire was still entire, no preparations were made, and no army assembled, to avenge either their own wrongs, or those of their monarch. The Spaniards remained in Caxamalca, tranquil and unmolested. Small detachments of their number marched into remote provinces of the empire, and instead of meeting any opposition, were every where received with marks of the most submissive respect. Nothing can be a more striking proof of this, than that three Spaniards travelled from Caxamalca to Cuzco. The distance between them is six-hundred miles. In every place throughout this great extent of country, they were treated with all the honours paid by the Peruvians to their sovereigns, and even to their divinities. Under pretext of amassing what was wanting for the ransom of the Inca, they demanded the plates of gold, with which the walls of the Temple of the Sun, in Cuzco, were adorned; and, though the priests were unwilling to alienate those sacred ornaments, and the people refused to violate the shrine of their god, the three Spaniards, with their own hands, robbed the temple of a part of this valuable treasure; and, so profound was the reverence of the natives for their persons, that, although they beheld



this act of sacrilege with astonishment, they did not attempt to prevent or disturb its perpetration.

Inconsiderable as were those parties, and desirous as Pizarro might be to obtain some knowledge of the interior state of the country, he could not have ventured upon any diminution of his main body, if he had not, about *December*. this time, received an account of Almagro's having landed at St. Michael, with so large a reinforcement, as would almost double the number of his followers. The arrival of this long expected succour, was not more agreeable to the Spaniards, than alarming to the Inca. He saw the power of his enemies increase ; and, as he knew neither the source whence they derived their supplies, nor the means by which they were conveyed to Peru, he could not foresee to what a height the inundation that poured in upon his dominions might rise. While disquieted with such apprehensions, he learned that some Spaniards, in their way to Cuzco, had visited his brother Huascar, in the place where he kept him confined, and that the captive prince had represented to them the justice of his own cause, and, as an inducement to espouse it, had promised them a quantity of treasure, much greater than that which Atahualpa had engaged to pay for his ransom. If the Spaniards should listen to this proposal, Atahualpa perceived his own destruction to be inevitable ; and, suspecting that their insatiable thirst for gold would tempt them to lend to it a favourable ear, he determined to sacrifice his brother's life, that he might save his own ; and his orders for this purpose were executed, like all his other commands, with scrupulous punctuality.

Meanwhile, Indians daily arrived at Caxamalca, from different parts of the kingdom, loaded with treasure. A great part of the stipulated quantity was now amassed, and Atahualpa, assured the Spaniards, that the only thing which prevented the whole from being brought in, was the remoteness of the provinces where it was deposited. But piles of gold so vast, presented continually to the view of needy soldiers, had so inflamed their avarice, that it was impossible any longer to restrain their impatience to obtain possession of this rich booty. Orders were given for melting down the whole, except some pieces of curious fabric, reserved as a present for the emperor. After setting apart a fifth due to the crown, and a hundred thousand pesos as a donative to the soldiers who arrived with Almagro, there remained one mil-



lion five-hundred and twenty-eight thousand five-hundred pesos to Pizarro and his followers.

There is no example in history, of so sudden an acquisition of wealth by military service; nor was ever a sum, so great, divided amongst so small a number of soldiers. Many of them having received a recompense for their services far beyond their most sanguine hopes, were so impatient to retire from fatigue and danger, in order to spend the remainder of their days in their native country, in ease and opulence, that they demanded their discharge with clamorous importunity. Pizarro, sensible that from such men he could expect neither enterprise in action, nor fortitude in suffering; and persuaded that wherever they went, the display of their riches would allure adventurers, less opulent but more hardy, to his standard; granted their suit without reluctance, and permitted above sixty of them to accompany his brother Ferdinand, whom he sent to Spain, with an account of his success, and the present destined for the emperor.

The Spaniards having divided the treasure amassed for the Inca's ransom, he insisted that they would fulfil their promise of setting him at liberty. But nothing was further from Pizarro's thoughts. During his long service in the new world, he had imbibed those ideas and maxims of his fellow-soldiers, which led them to consider its inhabitants as an inferior race, neither worthy of the name, nor entitled to the rights of men. In his compact with Atahualpa, he had no other object than to amuse his captive with such a prospect of recovering his liberty, as might induce him to lend all the aid of his authority towards collecting the wealth of his kingdom. Having now accomplished this, he no longer regarded his plighted faith; and, at the very time when the credulous prince hoped to be replaced on his throne, he had secretly resolved to bereave him of life. Many circumstances seem to have concurred in prompting him to this action, the most criminal and atrocious that stains the Spanish name, amidst all the deeds of violence committed in carrying on the conquest of the new world.

Though Pizarro had seized the Inca, in imitation of the conduct of Cortes towards the Mexican monarch, he did not possess talent for prosecuting the same artful plan of policy. There were accordingly excited between them mutual suspicion and distrust. The strict attention with which it was necessary to guard a captive of such importance, greatly in-

creased the fatigue of military duty. The utility of keeping him appeared inconsiderable; and Pizarro felt him as an incumbrance, from which he wished to be delivered.

He began, at length, to be alarmed by accounts of forces assembling in the remote provinces of the empire, and suspected Atahualpa of having issued orders for that purpose. The unhappy prince, at the same time, inadvertently contributed to hasten his own fate. During his confinement, he had attached himself, with peculiar affection, to Ferdinand Pizarro and Hernando Soto; who, as they were persons of birth and education superior to the rough adventurers with whom they served, were accustomed to behave to the captive monarch with more decency and attention. Soothed with this respect from persons of so high rank, he delighted in their society. But in the presence of the governor, he was always uneasy and overawed. This dread soon came to be mingled with contempt. Amongst all the European arts, what he admired most was that of reading and writing; and he long deliberated with himself, whether he should regard it as a natural or an acquired talent. In order to determine this, he desired one of the soldiers, who guarded him, to write the name of God on the nail of his thumb. This, he showed successively to several Spaniards, asking its meaning; and, to his amazement, they all, without hesitation, returned the same answer. At length, Pizarro entered, and, on presenting it to him, he blushed, and with some confusion was obliged to acknowledge his ignorance. From that moment, Atahualpa considered him as a mean person, less instructed than his own soldiers; and he had not address enough to conceal the sentiments with which this discovery inspired him. To be the object of a barbarian's scorn, not only mortified the pride of Pizarro, but excited such resentment in his breast, as added force to all the other considerations which prompted him to put the Inca to death.

But, in order to give some colour of justice to this violent action; and that he himself might be exempted from standing singly responsible for its commission, Pizarro resolved to try the Inca with all the formalities observed in the criminal courts of Spain. Pizarro himself, and Almagro, with two assistants, were appointed judges, with full power to acquit or to condemn; an attorney-general was named, to conduct the prosecution in the king's name; counsellors were chosen, to assist the prisoner in his defence; and clerks were ordained,

to record the proceedings of the court. Before this strange tribunal, a charge was exhibited, still more amazing. It consisted of various articles; that Atahualpa, though of illegitimate birth, had dispossessed the rightful owner of the throne, and usurped the regal power; that he had put his brother and lawful sovereign to death; that he was an idolator, and had not only permitted, but commanded, the offering of human sacrifices; that he had a great number of concubines; that, since his imprisonment, he had wasted and embezzled the royal treasures, which now belonged of right to the conquerors; that he had incited his subjects to take arms against the Spaniards. On these heads of accusation, so absurd and ludicrous, did this strange court proceed to try the sovereign of a great empire, over whom it had no jurisdiction. To judges predetermined in their opinion, any evidence is sufficient. They pronounced Atahualpa guilty, and condemned him to be burned alive. Friar Valverde prostituted the authority of his sacred function, to confirm this sentence, and by his signature warranted it to be just. Astonished at his fate, Atahualpa endeavoured to avert it, by tears, by promises, and by entreaties, that he might be sent to Spain, where a monarch would be the arbiter of his lot. But pity never touched the unfeeling heart of Pizarro. He ordered him to be led instantly to execution; and, what added to the bitterness of his last moments, the same monk who had just ratified his doom, offered to console, and attempted to convert him. The most powerful argument employed by Valverde, to prevail with him to embrace the christian faith, was a promise of mitigation in his punishment. The dread of a cruel death extorted from the trembling victim a desire of receiving baptism. The ceremony was performed, and Atahualpa, instead of being burned, was strangled at the stake!

Happily for the credit of the Spanish nation, even amongst the profligate adventurers which it sent forth to conquer and desolate the new world, there were persons who retained some tincture of generosity and honour. Several officers, and amongst those, some of the greatest reputation and most respectable families in the service, not only remonstrated, but protested against this measure of their general, as disgraceful to their country, as repugnant to every maxim of equity, as a violation of public faith, and a usurpation of jurisdiction over an independent monarch, to which they had no title,



On the death of Atahualpa, Pizarro invested one of his sons with the ensigns of royalty; hoping that a young man without experience might prove a more passive instrument in his hands, than an ambitious monarch, who had been accustomed to independent command. The people of Cuzco, and the adjacent country, acknowledged Manco Capac, a brother of Huascar, as Inca. But neither possessed the authority which belonged to a sovereign of Peru. The violent convulsions into which the empire had been thrown, first by the civil war between the two brothers, and then by the invasion of the Spaniards, had not only deranged the order of the Peruvian government, but almost dissolved its frame; and the people, in several provinces, broke out into the most licentious excesses. So many descendants of the Sun, after being treated with the utmost indignity, had been cut off by Atahualpa, that not only their influence in the state diminished with their number, but the accustomed reverence for that sacred race sensibly decreased. In consequence of this state of things, ambitious men, in different parts of the empire, aspired to independent authority, and usurped jurisdiction to which they had no title. The general who commanded for Atahualpa in Quito, seized the brother and children of his master, put them to a cruel death, and, disclaiming any connexion with either of the Incas, endeavoured to establish a separate kingdom for himself.

The Spaniards, with pleasure, beheld the spirit of discord diffusing itself, and the vigour of government relaxing amongst the Peruvians. Pizarro no longer hesitated to advance towards Cuzco, and he had received so considerable reinforcements, that he could venture, with little danger, to penetrate so far into the interior of the country. The account of the wealth acquired at Caxamalca, operated as he had foreseen. No sooner had his brother Ferdinand, with the officers and soldiers to whom he had given their discharge after the partition of the Inca's ransom, arrived at Panama, and displayed their riches in the view of their astonished countrymen, than fame spread the account with such exaggeration through all the Spanish settlements on the South Sea, that the governors of Guatemala, Panama, and Nicaragua, could hardly restrain the people under their jurisdiction, from abandoning their possessions, and crowding to that inexhaustible source of wealth which seemed to be opened in Peru. In spite of every check and regulation, so great numbers resorted thither, that



Pizarro began his march at the head of five-hundred men, after leaving a considerable garrison at St. Michael, under the command of Benalcazar. The Peruvians had assembled some large bodies of troops, to oppose his progress. Several fierce encounters happened. But they terminated like all the actions in America; a few Spaniards were killed or wounded, and the natives were put to flight with incredible slaughter. At length, Pizarro forced his way to Cuzco; took quiet possession of that capital; and found riches there, which, even after all that the natives had carried off and concealed, exceeded in value what had been received as Atahualpa's ransom.

During the march to Cuzco, that son of Atahualpa whom Pizarro treated as Inca, died; and, as the Spaniards had substituted no person in his place, the title of Manco Capac seems to have been universally recognised.

1534. By this time, Ferdinand Pizarro had landed in Spain. The immense quantities of gold and silver which he imported, filled the kingdom with no less astonishment than they had excited in Panama and the adjacent provinces. Pizarro was received by the emperor with the attention due to the bearer of a present, so rich, as to exceed any idea which the Spaniards had formed concerning the value of their acquisitions in America, even after they had been ten years masters of Mexico. In recompense of his brother's services, his authority was confirmed, with new powers and privileges, and the addition of seventy leagues, extending along the coast, to the southward of territory granted in his former patent. Almagro received the honours which he had so long desired. The title of adelantado, or governor, was conferred upon him, with jurisdiction over two-hundred leagues of country, stretching beyond the southern limits of the province allotted to Pizarro. Ferdinand himself did not go unrewarded. He was admitted into the military order of St. Jago, a distinction always acceptable to a Spanish gentleman, and soon set out on his return to Peru, accompanied by many persons of higher rank than had yet served in that country.

Some account of his negotiations reached Peru before he arrived there himself. Almagro no sooner learned that he had obtained the royal grant of an independent government, than, pretending that Cuzco, the imperial residence of the Incas, lay within its boundaries, he attempted to render himself master of that important station. Juan and Gonzalez Pizarro prepared to oppose him. Each of the contending

parties was supported by powerful adherents, and the dispute was on the point of being terminated by the sword, when Francis Pizarro arrived in the capital. The reconciliation between him and Almagro had never been cordial. The treachery of Pizarro, in engrossing to himself all the honours and emoluments, which ought to have been divided with his associate, was always present in both their thoughts. To each of them, was attached a small band of interested dependents, who, with the malicious art peculiar to such men, heightened their suspicions, and magnified every appearance of offence. But, with all those seeds of enmity in their minds, and thus assiduously cherished, each was so thoroughly acquainted with the abilities and courage of his rival, that they equally dreaded the consequences of an open rupture. The fortunate arrival of Pizarro at Cuzco, and the address mingled with firmness, which he manifested in his expostulations with Almagro and his partisans, averted that evil, for the present. A new reconciliation took place; the chief article of which was, that Almagro should attempt the conquest of Chili; and, if he did not find in that province an establishment adequate to his merit and expectations, Pizarro, by way of indemnification, should yield to him a part of Peru. This new agreement, though confirmed with the same sacred solemnities as their first contract, was observed with as little fidelity.

Soon after he concluded this important transaction, Pizarro marched back to the countries on the sea-coast, and, as he now enjoyed an interval of tranquility, undisturbed by any enemy, either Spanish or Indian, he applied himself with that persevering ardour which distinguishes his character, to introduce a form of regular government into the extensive provinces subject to his authority. He divided the country into various districts; he appointed proper magistrates to preside in each; and established regulations concerning the administration of justice, the collection of the royal revenue, the working of the mines, and the treatment of the Indians. He considered himself as laying the foundation of a great empire, and deliberating long, and with much solicitude, in what place he should fix the seat of government. Cuzco, the imperial city of the Incas, was situated in the corner of the empire, above four-hundred miles from the sea, and much farther from Quito; a province, respecting the value of which, he had formed a high idea. No other settlement of the Peruvians was so

considerable as to merit the name of a town, or to allure the Spaniards to fix their residence in it. But, in marching through the country, Pizarro had been struck with the beauty and fertility of the valley of Rimac, one of the most extensive and best cultivated in Peru. There, on the banks of a small river, of the same name with the vale which it waters and enriches, at the distance of six miles from Callao, the most commodious harbour in the Pacific Ocean, *Jan. 18, 1535.* he founded a city, which he destined to be the capital of his government. He gave it the name of Ciudad de los Reyes, either from the circumstance of having laid the first stone at that season when the church celebrates the festival of the Three Kings; or, as is more probable, in honour of Juana and Charles, the joint sovereigns of Castile. This name it still retains amongst the Spaniards, in all legal and formal deeds; but it is better known to foreigners by that of Lima, a corruption of the ancient appellation of the valley in which it is situated. Under his inspection, the buildings advanced so rapidly, that it soon assumed the form of a city, which, by a magnificent palace that he erected for himself, and by the stately houses built by several of his officers, gave, even in its infancy, some indication of its subsequent grandeur.

In consequence of what had been agreed with Pizarro, Almagro began his march towards Chili; and, as he possessed, in an eminent degree, the virtues most admired by soldiers,—boundless liberality and fearless courage—his standard was followed by five-hundred-and-seventy men, the greatest body of Europeans that had hitherto been assembled in Peru. From impatience to finish the expedition, or from that contempt of hardship and danger acquired by all the Spaniards who had served long in America; Almagro, instead of advancing through the level country on the coast, chose to march across the mountains, by a route that was shorter, indeed; but almost impracticable. In this attempt, his troops were exposed to every calamity which men can suffer, from fatigue, from famine, and from the rigour of the climate, in those elevated regions of the torrid zone, where the degree of cold is hardly inferior to what is felt within the polar circle. Many of them perished; and the survivors, when they descended into the fertile plains of Chili, had new difficulties to encounter. They found there a race of men very different from the people of Peru; intrepid, hardy, independent,



and in their bodily constitution, as well as vigour of spirit, nearly resembling the warlike tribes in North America. Though filled with wonder at the first appearance of the Spaniards, and still more astonished at the operations of the cavalry, and the effects of their fire-arms, the Chilese soon recovered from their surprise, so as not only to defend themselves with obstinacy, but to attack their new enemies with more determined fierceness than any American nation had hitherto discovered. The Spaniards, however, continued to penetrate into the country, and collected considerable quantities of gold; but they were so far from thinking of making any settlement amidst so formidable neighbours, that, notwithstanding all the experience and valour of their leader, the final issue of the expedition still remained extremely dubious, when they were recalled from it by an unexpected revolution in Peru.

So many adventurers had flocked to Peru, from every Spanish colony in America, and all with so high expectations of at once accumulating independent fortunes, that, to men possessed with notions so extravagant, any mention of acquiring wealth gradually, and by schemes of patient industry, would have been not only a disappointment, but an insult. In order to find occupation for men who could not with safety be allowed to remain inactive, Pizarro encouraged some of the most distinguished officers who had lately joined him, to invade different provinces of the empire, not hitherto visited by the Spaniards. For this purpose, several large bodies were formed, and, about the time that Almagro set out for Chili, they marched into remote districts of the country. No sooner did Manco Capac, the Inca, observe the inconsiderate security of the Spaniards in thus dispersing their troops, and that only a handful of soldiers remained in Cuzco, under Juan and Gonzalez Pizarro, than he thought that the happy period had at length arrived, for vindicating his own rights, for avenging the wrongs of his country, and extirpating its oppressors. Though strictly watched by the Spaniards, who allowed him to reside in the palace of his ancestors at Cuzco, he found means of communicating his scheme to the persons who were to be intrusted with its execution.

1536. After some unsuccessful attempts of the Inca to make his escape, Ferdinand Pizarro happening to arrive at that time in Cuzco, he obtained permission from him to attend a great festival, which was to be celebrated a few



leagues from the capital. Under the pretext of that solemnity, the great men of the empire were assembled. As soon as the Inca joined them, the standard of war was erected; and in a short time all the fighting men, from the confines of Quito to the frontier of Chili, were in arms. Many Spaniards, living securely on the settlements allotted them, were massacred. Several detachments, as they marched carelessly through a country which seemed to be tamely submissive to their dominion, were cut off, to a man. An army, amounting (if we may believe the Spanish writers) to two-hundred-thousand men, attacked Cuzco, which the three brothers endeavoured to defend with only one-hundred-and-seventy Spaniards. Another formidable body invested Lima, and kept the governor closely besieged. There was no longer any communication between the two cities; the numerous forces of the Peruvians, spreading over the country, intercepted every messenger; and, as the parties in Cuzco and Lima were equally unacquainted with the fate of their countrymen, each foreboded the worst concerning the other, and imagined that they themselves were the only persons who had survived the general extinction of the Spanish name in Peru.

It was at Cuzco, where the Inca commanded in person, that the Peruvians made their chief effort. During nine months, they carried on the siege with incessant ardour, and in various forms; and though they displayed not the same undaunted ferocity as the Mexican warriors, they conducted some of their operations in a manner which discovered greater sagacity, and a genius more susceptible of improvement in the military art. They not only observed the advantages which the Spaniards derived from their discipline and their weapons, but they endeavoured to imitate the former, and turn the latter against them. They armed a considerable body of their bravest warriors with the swords, the spears, and bucklers, which they had taken from the Spanish soldiers, whom they had cut off in different parts of the country. These, they endeavoured to marshal in that regular compact order, to which experience had taught them that the Spaniards were indebted for their irresistible force in action. Some appeared in the field with Spanish muskets, and had acquired skill and resolution enough to use them. A few of the boldest, amongst whom was the Inca himself, were mounted on the horses which they had taken, and advanced briskly

to the charge, like Spanish cavaliers, with their lances in the rest. The Peruvians not only imitated the military art of the Spaniards, but had recourse to devices of their own. As the cavalry were the chief object of their terror, they endeavoured to render them incapable of acting by means of a long thong, with a stone fastened to each end. This, when thrown by a skilful hand, twisted about the horse and his rider, and entangled them, so as to obstruct their motions. Another instance of the ingenuity of the Peruvians, deserves to be mentioned. By turning a river out of its channel, they overflowed a valley, in which a body of the enemy was posted, so suddenly, that it was with the utmost difficulty the Spaniards escaped. It was more by their numbers, however, than by imperfect essays to imitate European arts, and to employ European arms, that the Peruvians annoyed the Spaniards. Notwithstanding the valour, heightened by despair, with which the three brothers defended Cuzco, Manco Capac recovered possession of one half of his capital; and, in their various efforts to drive him out, the Spaniards lost Juan Pizarro, the best beloved of all the brothers, together with some other persons of note. Worn out by the fatigue of incessant duty, distressed by want of provisions, despairing of being able any longer to resist an enemy, whose numbers daily increased, the soldiers became impatient to abandon Cuzco, in hopes either of joining their countrymen, if any of them yet survived, or of forcing their way to the sea, and finding some means of escaping from a country which had been so fatal to the Spanish name. While they were brooding over those desponding thoughts, which their officers laboured in vain to dispel, Almagro appeared suddenly in the neighbourhood of Cuzco.

The accounts transmitted to Almagro, concerning the general insurrection of the Peruvians, were such as would have induced him, without hesitation, to relinquish the conquest of Chili, and hasten to the aid of his countrymen. But in this resolution, he was confirmed by a motive less generous, but more interesting. By the same messenger who brought him intelligence of the Inca's revolt, he received the royal patent, creating him governor of Chili, and defining the limits of his jurisdiction. On considering its tenor, he deemed it manifest, beyond contradiction, that Cuzco lay within the boundaries of his government, and he was equally solicitous to prevent the Peruvians from recovering posses-

sion of their capital, and to wrest it out of the hands of the Pizarros. From impatience to accomplish both, he ventured to return by a new route; and, in marching through the sandy plains on the coast, he suffered from heat and drought, calamities of a new species, hardly inferior to those in which he had been involved by cold and famine on the summits of the Andes.

1537. His arrival at Cuzco was in a critical moment. The Spaniards and Peruvians fixed their eyes upon him with equal solicitude. The former, as he did not study to conceal his pretensions, were at a loss whether to welcome him as a deliverer, or to take precautions against him as an enemy. The latter, knowing the points in contest between him and his countrymen, flattered themselves that they had more to hope than to dread from his operations. Almagro himself, unacquainted with the detail of the events which had happened in his absence, and solicitous to learn the precise posture of affairs, advanced towards the capital slowly, and with great circumspection. Various negotiations, with both parties, commenced. The Inca conducted them, on his part, with much address. At first, he endeavoured to gain the friendship of Almagro; and, after many fruitless overtures, despairing of any cordial union with a Spaniard, he attacked him, by surprise, with a numerous body of chosen troops. But the Spanish discipline and valour maintained their wonted superiority. The Peruvians were repulsed with so great slaughter, that a great part of their army dispersed, and Almagro proceeded to the gates of Cuzco without interruption.

The Pizarros, as they had no longer to make head against the Peruvians, directed all their attention towards their new enemy, and took measures to obstruct his entry into the capital. Prudence, however, restrained both parties, for some time, from turning their arms against each other, while surrounded by common enemies, who would rejoice in the mutual slaughter. Different schemes of accommodation were proposed. Each endeavoured to deceive the other, or to corrupt his followers. The generous, open, affable temper of Almagro, gained many adherents of the Pizarros, who were disgusted with their harsh domineering manners. Encouraged by this defection, he advanced towards the city by night, surprised the sentinels, or was admitted by them, and, investing the house where the two brothers resided, com-



pelled them, after an obstinate defence, to surrender at discretion. Almagro's claim of jurisdiction over Cuzco was universally acknowledged, and a form of administration established in his name.

Only two or three persons were killed, in this first act of civil hostility; but it was soon followed by scenes more bloody.

Pizarro was still unacquainted with all the interesting events which had happened near Cuzco. Accounts of Almagro's return, of the loss of the capital, of the death of one brother, of the imprisonment of the other two, and of the defeat of Alvarado, were brought to him at once. Such a tide of misfortunes almost overwhelmed a spirit which had continued firm and erect under the rudest shocks of adversity. But the necessity of attending to his own safety, as well as the desire of revenge, preserved him from sinking under it. He took measures for both, with his usual sagacity. As he had the command of the sea-coast, and expected considerable supplies, both of men and military stores, it was no less his interest to gain time, and to avoid an action, than it was that of Almagro to precipitate operations, and bring the contest to a speedy issue. He had recourse to arts formerly practised by him with success, and Almagro was again weak enough to suffer himself to be amused with a prospect of terminating their differences by some amicable accommodation. By varying his overtures, as often as it suited his purpose, Pizarro dexterously protracted the negotiation to so great a length, that, though every day was precious to Almagro, several months elapsed without coming to any final agreement. While the attention of Almagro, and of the officers with whom he consulted, was occupied in detecting and eluding the fraudulent intentions of the governor, Gonzalo Pizarro and Alvarado found means to corrupt the soldiers to whose custody they were committed, and not only made their escape themselves, but persuaded sixty of the men who formally guarded them, to accompany them in their flight. Fortune having thus delivered one of his brothers, the governor scrupled not at one act of perfidy more, to procure the release of the other. He proposed, that every point in controversy between Almagro and himself should be submitted to the decision of their sovereign; that, until his award was known, each should retain undisturbed possession of whatever part of the country he now occupied; that Ferdi-



and Pizarro should be set at liberty, and return instantly to Spain, together with the officers, whom Almagro proposed to send thither to represent the justness of his claims. Obvious as was the design of Pizarro in those propositions, and familiar as his artifices might now have been to his opponent; Almagro, with a credulity approaching to infatuation, relied on his sincerity, and concluded an agreement on these terms.

The moment that Ferdinand Pizarro recovered his liberty, the governor, no longer fettered in his operations by anxiety about his brother's life, threw off every disguise which his concern for it had obliged him to assume. The treaty was forgotten; pacific and conciliating measures were no more mentioned; it was in the field, he openly declared, and not in the cabinet; by arms, and not by negotiation; that it must now be determined who should be master of Peru. The rapidity of his preparations suited so decisive a resolution. Seven-hundred men were soon ready to march towards Cuzco. The command of these was given to his two brothers, in whom he could perfectly confide for the execution of his most violent schemes, as they were not only urged on by the enmity flowing from the rivalry between their family and Almagro, but animated with the desire of vengeance, excited by a recollection of their own recent disgrace and sufferings. After an unsuccessful attempt to cross the mountains in the direct road between Lima and Cuzco, they marched towards the south, along the coast, as far as Nasca, and then turning to the left, penetrated through the defiles in that branch of the Andes which lay between them and the capital. Almagro, instead of hearkening to some of his officers, who advised him to attempt the defence of those difficult passes, waited the approach of the enemy in the plain of Cuzco. Two reasons seem to have induced him to take this resolution. His followers amounted hardly to five-hundred, and he was afraid of weakening so feeble a body, by sending any detachment towards the mountains. His cavalry far exceeded that of the adverse party, both in number and discipline, and it was only in an open country that he could avail himself of that advantage.

1538. The Pizarros advanced without any obstruction, but what arose from the nature of the desert and horrid regions through which they marched. As soon as they reached the plain, both factions were equally impatient to bring this long-protracted contest to an issue. The conflict

was fierce, and maintained by each party with equal courage. On the side of Almagro, were more veteran soldiers, and a larger proportion of cavalry; but these were counterbalanced by Pizarro's superiority in numbers, and by two companies of well-disciplined musketeers, which, on receiving an account of the insurrection of the Indians, the emperor had sent from Spain. As the use of fire-arms was not frequent amongst the adventurers in America, hastily equipped for service, at their own expense, this small band of soldiers, regularly trained and armed, was a novelty in Peru, and decided the fate of the day. Wherever it advanced, the weight of a heavy and well-sustained fire bore down before it both horse and foot; and Orgognez, while he endeavoured to rally and animate his troops, having received a dangerous wound, the rout became general. The barbarity of the conquerors stained the glory which they acquired by this complete victory. The violence of civil rage hurried on some to slaughter their countrymen with indiscriminate cruelty; the meanness of private revenge instigated others to single out individuals as the objects of their vengeance. Orgognez and several officers of distinction were massacred in cold blood; above a hundred-and-forty soldiers fell in the field; and Almagro, endeavouring to save himself by flight, was taken prisoner, and guarded with the strictest vigilance.

The Indians, instead of executing the resolution which they had formed, of attacking whichever party remained master of the field, retired quietly after the battle was over; and, in the history of the new world, there is not a more striking instance of the wonderful ascendance acquired by the Spaniards over its inhabitants, than, that after seeing one of the contending parties ruined and dispersed, and the other weakened and fatigued, they had not courage to fall upon their enemies, when fortune presented an opportunity of attacking them with such advantage.

Almagro remained for several months in custody, under all the anguish of suspense. For, although his doom was determined by the Pizarros, from the moment that he fell into their hands, prudence constrained them to defer gratifying their vengeance, until the soldiers who had served under him, as well as several of their own followers in whom they could not perfectly confide, had left Cuzco. As soon as they had set out upon their different expeditions, Almagro was impeached of treason, formally tried, and condemned to die.

He was strangled in prison, and afterwards publicly beheaded. He suffered in the seventy-fifth year of his age, and left only one son, by an Indian woman, whom, though at that time a prisoner at Lima, he named as successor to his government, pursuant to a power which had been granted him by Charles V.

As, during the civil dissensions in Peru, all intercourse with Spain was suspended, the detail of the extraordinary transactions which occurred there, did not soon reach the court. Unfortunately for the victorious faction, the first intelligence was brought thither by some of Almagro's officers, who left the country on the ruin of their cause; and they related what had happened, with every circumstance unfavourable to Pizarro and his brothers. Their ambition, their breach of the most solemn engagements, their violence and cruelty, were painted with all the malignity and exaggeration of party hatred. Ferdinand Pizarro, who arrived soon afterwards, and appeared in court with extraordinary splendour, endeavoured to efface the impression made by those accusations, and to justify his brother and himself, by representing Almagro as the aggressor. The emperor and his ministers, though they could not pronounce which of the contending factions was most criminal, clearly discerned the fatal tendency of their dissensions. It was obvious, that, while the leaders, intrusted with the conduct of the two infant colonies, employed the arms which should have been turned against the common enemy, in destroying one another, all the attention to the public good must cease, and there was reason to dread, that the Indians might take advantage of this disunion of the Spaniards, and extirpate both the victors and the vanquished. Nothing, therefore, remained, but to send  
1539. a person to Peru, vested with extensive and discretionary power, who, after viewing deliberately the posture of affairs with his own eyes, and inquiring, upon the spot, into the conduct of the different leaders, should be authorised to establish the government in that form which he deemed most conducive to the interest of the parent state, and the welfare of the colony. The man selected for this important charge, was Christoval Vaca de Castro, a judge in the court of royal audience at Valladolid; whose abilities, integrity, and firmness, justified the choice. His instructions, though ample, were not such as to fetter him in his operations. According to the different aspect of affairs, he had power to take upon



him different characters. If he found the governor still alive, he was to assume only the title of judge, to maintain the appearance of acting in concert with him, and to guard against giving any just cause of offence to a man who had merited so highly of his country. But if Pizarro were dead, he was intrusted with a commission that he might then produce, by which he was appointed his successor in the government of Peru. This attention to Pizarro, however, seems to have been excited rather by the dread of his power, than by any approbation of his measures; for, at the very time that the court seemed solicitous not to irritate him, his brother Ferdinand was arrested at Madrid, and confined to a prison, where he remained above twenty years.

1540. While Vaca de Castro was preparing for his voyage, events of great moment happened in Peru. The governor, considering himself, upon the death of Almagro, as the unrivaled possessor of that vast empire, proceeded to parcel out its territories amongst the conquerors; and, had this division been made with any degree of impartiality, the extent of country which he had to bestow, was sufficient to have gratified his friends, and to have gained his enemies. But Pizarro conducted this transaction, not with the equity and candour of a judge, attentive to discover and reward merit, but with the illiberal spirit of a party leader. Large districts, in parts of the country most cultivated and populous, were set apart as his own property, or granted to his brothers, his adherents, and favourites. To others, lots less valuable and inviting were assigned. The followers of Almagro, amongst whom were many of the original adventurers, to whose valour and perseverance Pizarro was indebted for his success, were totally excluded from any portion in those lands, towards the acquisition of which they had so largely contributed. All who were disappointed in their expectation, exclaimed loudly against the rapaciousness and partiality of the governor. The partisans of Almagro murmured in secret, and meditated revenge.

Rapid as had been the progress of the Spaniards in South America, since Pizarro landed in Peru, their avidity of dominion was not yet satisfied. The officers to whom Ferdinand Pizarro had given the command of different detachments, penetrated into several new provinces, and made discoveries and conquests which not only extended their knowledge of the country, but added considerably to the ter-



ritories of Spain in the new world. Pedro de Valdivia resumed Almagro's scheme of invading Chili, and, notwithstanding the fortitude of the natives in defending their possessions, made such progress in the conquest of the country, that he founded the city of St. Jago, and gave a beginning to the establishment of the Spanish dominion in that province. But, of all the enterprises undertaken about this period, that of Gonzalo Pizarro was the most remarkable. The governor, who seems to have resolved that no person in Peru should possess any station of distinguished eminence or authority, but those of his own family, had deprived Benalcazar, the conqueror of Quito, of his command in that kingdom, and appointed his brother Gonzalo to assume the government. He instructed him to attempt the discovery and conquest of the country to the east of the Andes, which, according to the information of the Indians, abounded with cinnamon and other valuable spices. Gonzalo, not inferior to any of his brothers in courage, and no less ambitious of acquiring distinction, eagerly engaged in this difficult service. He set out from Quito at the head of three-hundred-and-forty soldiers, nearly one half of whom were horsemen, with four-thousand Indians to carry their provisions. In forcing their way through the defiles, or over the ridges of the Andes, excess of cold and fatigue, to neither of which they had been accustomed, proved fatal to the greater part of their wretched attendants. The Spaniards, though more robust, and inured to a variety of climates, suffered considerably, and lost some men; but, when they descended into the low country, their distress increased. During two months, it rained incessantly, without any interval of fair weather, long enough to dry their clothes. The immense plains upon which they were now entering, either altogether without inhabitants, or occupied by the rudest and least industrious tribes in the new world, yielded little subsistence. They could not advance a step, without cutting a road through woods, or making it through marshes. So incessant toil, and continual scarcity of food, seem more than sufficient to have exhausted and dispirited any troops. But the fortitude and perseverance of the Spaniards, in the sixteenth century, were insuperable. Allured by frequent but false accounts of rich countries before them, they persisted in struggling on, until they reached the banks of the Coca or Napo, one of the large rivers, the waters of which pour into the Maragnon, and contribute to its gran-

deur. There, with infinite labour, they built a bark, which they expected would prove of great utility, in conveying them over rivers, in procuring provisions, and in exploring the country. This was manned with fifty soldiers, under the command of Francis Orellana, the officer next in rank to Pizarro. The stream carried them down with such rapidity, that they were soon far a-head of their countrymen, who followed slowly, and with difficulty, by land.

At this distance from his commander, Orellana, a young man of an aspiring mind, began to fancy himself independent, and, transported with the predominant passion of the age, he formed the scheme of distinguishing himself as a discoverer, by following the course of the Maragnon, until it joined the ocean, and by surveying the vast regions through which it flows. This scheme of Orellana's was as bold as it was treacherous. While he is chargeable with the guilt of having violated his duty to his commander, and with having abandoned his fellow-soldiers in a pathless desert, where they had hardly any hopes of success, or even of safety, but what were founded on the service which they expected from the bark; his crime is, in some measure, balanced, by the glory of having ventured upon a navigation of nearly two-thousand leagues, through unknown nations, in a vessel hastily constructed by very unskilful hands, without provisions, without a compass or a pilot. But his courage and alacrity supplied every defect. Committing himself fearlessly to the guidance of the stream, the Napo bore him along to the south, until he reached the great channel of the Maragnon. Turning with it towards the coast, he held on his course in that direction. He made frequent descents, on both sides of the river; sometimes seizing, by force of arms, the provisions of the fierce savages seated on its banks; and sometimes procuring a supply of food by a friendly intercourse with more gentle tribes. After a long series of dangers, which he encountered with amazing fortitude, and of distresses which he supported with no less magnanimity, he reached the ocean, where new perils awaited him. These he likewise surmounted, and at length arrived safe at the Spanish settlement in the island of Cubagua; whence he sailed to Spain.

The vanity natural to travellers who visit regions unknown to the rest of mankind, and the art of an adventurer, solicitous to magnify his own merit, concurred in prompting him

to mingle an extraordinary proportion of the marvellous in the narrative of his voyage. He pretended to have discovered nations so rich, that the roofs of their temples were covered with plates of gold; and described a republic of women, so warlike and powerful, as to have extended their dominion over a considerable tract of the fertile plains which he had visited. Extravagant as those tales were, they gave rise to an opinion, that a region abounding with gold, distinguished by the name of *El Dorado*; and a community of Amazons, were to be found in this part of the new world; and such is the propensity of mankind to believe what is wonderful, that it has been slowly and with difficulty that reason and observation have exploded those fables. But, even when stripped of every romantic embellishment, it deserves to be recorded, not only as one of the most memorable occurrences in that adventurous age, but as the first event that led to any certain knowledge of the extensive countries which stretch eastward from the Andes to the ocean.

That hazardous undertaking, to which Orellana had been prompted by ambition, was, at a subsequent period,\* undertaken by Madame Godin des Odonais, from conjugal affection. The narrative of the hardships which she suffered, of the dangers to which she was exposed, and of the disasters which befel her, is one of the most singular and affecting stories in any language; exhibiting, in her conduct, a striking picture of the fortitude which distinguishes the one sex, mingled with the sensibility and tenderness peculiar to the other.

No words can describe the consternation of Pizarro, when he did not find the bark at the confluence of the Napo and Maragnon, where he had ordered Orellana to wait for him. He would not allow himself to suspect, that a man, whom he had entrusted with so important a command, could be so base and so unfeeling, as to desert him at such a juncture; but, imputing his absence from the place of rendezvous to some unknown accident, he advanced above fifty leagues along the banks of the Maragnon, expecting every moment to see the bark appear with a supply of provisions. At length, 1541. he overtook an officer whom Orellana had left to perish in the desert, because he had the courage to remonstrate against his perfidy. From him, he learnt the extent of Orel-

\* A. D. 1769.



lana's crime, and his followers perceived, at once, their own desperate situation, when deprived of their only resource. The spirit of the stoutest hearted veteran sunk within him, and all demanded instantly to be led back. Pizarro, though he assumed an appearance of tranquillity, did not oppose their inclination. But he was now twelve-hundred miles from Quito; and in that long march the Spaniards encountered hardships, greater than those which they had endured in their progress outward, without the alluring hopes by which they were then soothed and animated under their sufferings. Hunger compelled them to feed on roots and berries, to eat all their dogs and horses, to devour the most loathsome reptiles, and even to gnaw the leather of their saddles and sword-belts. Four-thousand Indians, and two-hundred-and-ten Spaniards perished in this wild, disastrous expedition, which continued nearly two years; and, as fifty men were on board the bark with Orellana, only eighty returned to Quito. These were naked like savages, and so emaciated with famine, or worn out with fatigue, that they had more the appearance of spectres, than of men.

But, instead of returning to enjoy the repose which his condition required, Pizarro, on entering Quito, received accounts of a fatal event which threatened calamities more dreadful to him than those through which he had passed. From the time that his brother made that partial division of his conquests which has been mentioned, the adherents of Almagro, considering themselves as proscribed by the party in power, no longer entertained any hope of bettering their condition. Great numbers in despair resorted to Lima, where the house of young Almagro was always open to them, and the slender portion of his father's fortune, which the governor allowed him to enjoy, was spent in affording them subsistence. The warm attachment, with which every person who had served under the elder Almagro devoted himself to his interests, was quickly transferred to his son, who was now grown up to the age of manhood, and possessed all the qualities which captivate the affections of soldiers. In this young man, the Almagrians found a point of union, and, looking up to him as their head, were ready to undertake any thing for his advancement. Herrada, an officer of great abilities, who had the charge of Almagro's education, directed their consultations.

On Sunday, the 26th of June, at mid-day, the season of



tranquility and repose in sultry climates, Herrada, at the head of eighteen of the most determined conspirators, sallied out of Almagro's house, in complete armour; and, drawing their swords, as they advanced hastily towards the governor's palace, cried out, "Long live the king, but let the tyrant die!" Their associates, warned of their motions by a signal, were in arms, at different stations, ready to support them. Though Pizarro was usually surrounded by as numerous a train of attendants, as suited the magnificence of the most opulent subject of the age in which he lived, yet, as he had just risen from table, and most of his domestics had retired to their own apartments, the conspirators passed through the two outer courts of the palace, unobserved. They were at the bottom of the stair-case, before a page in waiting could give the alarm to his master, who was conversing with a few friends, in a large hall. The governor, whose steady mind no form of danger could appal, starting up, called for arms; and commanded Francisco de Chaves to fasten the door. But that officer, who did not retain so much presence of mind as to obey this prudent order, running to the top of the stair-case, wildly asked the conspirators what they meant, and whither they were going. Instead of answering, they stabbed him to the heart, and burst into the hall. Some of the persons who were there, threw themselves from the windows; others attempted to fly; and a few, drawing their swords, followed their leader into an inner apartment. The conspirators, animated with having the object of their vengeance now in view, rushed forward after them. Pizarro, with no other arms than his sword and buckler, defended the entry, and, supported by his half-brother Alcantara, and his little knot of friends, he maintained the unequal contest with intrepidity worthy of his vast exploits, and with the vigour of a youthful combatant. "Courage," cried he, "companions, we are yet enough to make those traitors repent of their audacity." But the armour of the conspirators protected them, while every thrust they made took effect. Alcantara fell dead at his brother's feet; his other defenders were mortally wounded. Pizarro, so exhausted that he could hardly wield his sword, and no longer able to parry the many weapons furiously aimed at him, received a deadly thrust in his throat, sunk to the ground, and expired.

As soon as he was slain, the assassins ran out into the streets, and, waving their bloody swords, proclaimed the death

of the tyrant. Above two-hundred of their associates having joined them, they conducted young Almagro in solemn procession through the city, and, assembling the magistrates and principal citizens, compelled them to acknowledge him as lawful successor to his father, in his government. The palace of Pizarro, together with the houses of several of his adherents, were pillaged by the soldiers, who had the satisfaction at once of being avenged on their enemies, and of enriching themselves by the spoils of those through whose hands all the wealth of Peru had passed.

The boldness and success of the conspiracy, as well as the name and popular qualities of Almagro, drew many soldiers to his standard. Every adventurer of desperate fortune, all who were dissatisfied with Pizarro—and, from the rapaciousness of his government in the latter years of his life, the number of malcontents was considerable—declared, without hesitation, in favour of Almagro, and he was soon at the head of eight-hundred of the most gallant veterans in Peru. As his youth and inexperience disqualified him from taking the command of them himself, he appointed Herrada to act as general. But though Almagro speedily collected so respectable a force, the acquiescence in his government was far from being general. Pizarro had left many friends to whom his memory was dear; the barbarous assassination of a man to whom his country was so highly indebted, filled every impartial person with horror. The ignominious birth of Almagro, as well as the doubtful title on which he founded his pretensions, led others to consider him as a usurper. The officers who commanded in some provinces, refused to recognise his authority, until it was confirmed by the emperor. In others, particularly at Cuzco, the royal standard was erected, and preparations were begun, in order to revenge the murder of their ancient leader.

Thus, have we related, with a brevity conformable with our design, the Discovery of the New World by Columbus, and the subsequent achievements of the Spanish adventurers, concluding with the Conquest of Peru.—To pursue the narrative through all the various revolutions caused by the ambitious spirit of the several leaders, who, in rapid succession, soon afterwards rose upon the ruin of their conquered rivals, would be not only tedious, but uninteresting. Almagro did not long survive the assassination of Francis Pizarro: having been defeated and taken prisoner by the new governor, Vaco

de Castro, he was beheaded : Gonzalo Pizarro, together with Carvajal, suffered the same fate ; while Ferdinand Pizarro remained a state prisoner in Spain.

During those violent convulsions in Peru, Charles V. and his ministers were employed in preparing regulations, by which they hoped not only to re-establish tranquility there, but to introduce a more efficient system of internal policy with all their settlements in the new world. Rapid and extensive as had been the Spanish conquests in America, they were not conducted by any regular exertion of the national force, but by the occasional efforts of private adventurers. After fitting out a few of the first armaments for discovering new regions, the court of Spain, during the busy reigns of Ferdinand and of Charles V.—the former the most intriguing prince of the age, the latter the most ambitious—was incumbered with so great a multiplicity of schemes, and involved in war with so many nations of Europe, that it had not leisure to attend to distant and less interesting objects. The care of prosecuting discovery, or of attempting conquest, was abandoned to individuals ; and, with such ardour did men push forward in this new career, on which novelty, the spirit of adventure, avarice, ambition, and the hope of meriting heaven, prompted them, with combined influence to enter, in less than half a century, almost the whole of that extensive empire which Spain, at the beginning of the nineteenth century possessed in the new world, was subjected to her dominion.



## CHAPTER XIII.

### MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

WHEN compared with other parts of the New World, Mexico and Peru, at the time of their conquest by the Spaniards, may be considered as polished states. But, if the comparison be made with the ancient continent, their inferiority will be conspicuous ; and neither the Mexicans nor the Peruvians will be entitled to rank with those nations

which merit the name of civilized. The people of both the great empires in America, like the rude tribes around them, were wholly unacquainted with the useful metals; and the progress made by them, in extending their dominion over the animal creation, was inconsiderable. The Mexicans had gone no farther, than to tame and rear turkeys and ducks, a species of small dogs and rabbits: they had no idea of attempting to subdue the more robust animals, or of deriving any aid from their ministry, in prosecuting works of labour. The Peruvians seem to have neglected the inferior animals, not having domesticated any of them except the duck; but they were more fortunate in taming the lama; an animal peculiar to their country, of a form which bears some resemblance to a deer, and some to a camel, and is in size rather larger than a sheep. Under the protection of man, this species multiplied greatly. Its wool furnished the Peruvians with clothing; its flesh, with food. It was even employed as a beast of burthen, and carried a moderate load with much docility and patience. It was never used for draught; and the breed being confined to the mountainous country, its service, if we may judge by incidents which occur in the early Spanish writings, was not very extensive amongst the Peruvians, in their original state.

In tracing the line by which nations proceed towards civilization, the discovery of the useful metals, and the acquisition of dominion over the animal creation, have been marked as steps of capital importance in their progress. The Mexicans and Peruvians, without a knowledge of the useful metals, or the aid of domestic animals, laboured under disadvantages, which must have greatly retarded their progress; and, in their highest state of improvement, their power was so limited, and their operations so feeble, that they can scarcely be considered as having advanced beyond the infancy of civil life.

Mexico was first subjected to the Spanish crown. But our acquaintance with its laws and manners, is not, from that circumstance, more complete. Cortes, and the rapacious adventurers who accompanied him, had not leisure or capacity to enrich either civil or natural history with new observations. They undertook their expedition in quest of one object, and seemed hardly to have turned their eyes towards any other. It is rather from incidents which they relate occasionally, than from their own deductions and remarks, that we are ena-



bled to form some idea of the genius and manners of that people.

The obscurity in which the annals of Mexico were involved, by the ignorance of its conquerors, was augmented by the superstition of those who succeeded them. As the memory of past events was preserved amongst the Mexicans, by figures painted on skins, on cotton-cloth, on a kind of paste-board, or on the bark of trees, the early missionaries, unable to comprehend their meaning, and struck with their uncouth forms, conceived them to be monuments of idolatry, which ought to be destroyed, in order to facilitate the conversion of the Indians. In obedience to an edict, issued by Juan de Zummaraga, a Franciscan monk, the first bishop of Mexico, as many records of the ancient Mexican annals as could be collected, were committed to the flames. In consequence of this fanatical zeal, whatever knowledge of remote events which monuments so rude contained, was almost entirely lost, and no information remained, concerning the ancient revolutions and policy of the empire, except what was derived from tradition, or from some fragments of their historical paintings that escaped the barbarous researches of Zummaraga.

According to the account of the Mexicans themselves, their empire was not of long duration. Their country, as they relate, was rather possessed, than peopled, by small independent tribes, whose mode of life and manners resembled those of the rudest savages that we have described. But, about a period corresponding to the beginning of the tenth century in the christian era, several tribes moved, in successive migrations, from unknown regions towards the north and north-west, and settled in different provinces of Anahuac, the ancient name of New Spain. These, more civilized than the original inhabitants, began to form them to the arts of social life. At length, towards the commencement of the thirteenth century, the Mexicans, a people more polished than any of the former, advanced from the border of the Californian gulf, and took possession of the plains adjacent to the great lake, near the centre of the country. After residing there about fifty years, they founded a town, since distinguished by the name of Mexico, which, from humble beginnings, soon grew to be the most considerable city in the new world.

The Mexicans, long after they were established in their new possessions, continued, like other martial tribes in Ame-

rica, unacquainted with regal dominion ; and were governed in peace, and conducted in war, by such as were entitled to pre-eminence by their wisdom or their valour. But the supreme authority centred, at last, in a single person ; and when the Spaniards, under Cortes, invaded the country, Montezuma, as we have already stated, in a preceding chapter, was the ninth monarch in order, who had swayed the Mexican sceptre, not by hereditary right, but by election.

Such, is the traditional tale of the Mexicans, concerning the progress of their own empire. According to this, its duration was very short. From the first migration of the parent tribe, they can reckon little more than three-hundred years : from the establishment of monarchical government, not above one-hundred-and-thirty years, according to one account, or one-hundred-and-ninety-seven, according to another computation, had elapsed.

In the Mexican empire, the right of private property was perfectly understood, and established in its full extent. The distinction between property in lands, and property in goods, had taken place. Both might be transferred from one person to another, by sale or barter : both might descend by inheritance. Every person who could be denominated a freeman, had property in land. This, however, they held by various tenures. Some possessed it in full right, and could transmit it to their heirs. The titles of others to their lands was derived from the office or dignity which they enjoyed ; and when deprived of the latter, they lost possession of the former. Both these modes of occupying land, was deemed noble, and peculiar to citizens of the highest class. The tenure by which the great body of the people held their lands, was very different. In every district, a certain quantity of land was measured out, in proportion to the number of families. This was cultivated by the joint labour of the whole : its produce was deposited in a common store-house, and divided amongst them, according to their respective wants.

Another striking circumstance, which distinguishes the Mexican empire from those countries in America which we have already described, is the number and greatness of its cities. On entering New Spain, the Spaniards were astonished to find the natives residing in towns so extensive that they resembled those of Europe. Zempoala, Tlascala, and Cholula ; Tacuba, Tezeuco, and Mexico, they compared with

the cities of the greatest note in their own country; and, from their accounts, we can hardly suppose the latter to have contained fewer than sixty-thousand inhabitants.

The separation of professions amongst the Mexicans, is a symptom of improvement, no less remarkable. The functions of the mason, the weaver, the goldsmith, the painter, and of several other crafts, were carried on by different persons. Each was regularly instructed in his calling. To it alone, his industry was confined; and, by assiduous application to one object, their artizans attained a high degree of neatness and perfection in work, far beyond what could have been expected from the rude tools which they employed. Their various productions became articles of commerce; and by their exchange in the stated markets held in the cities, not only were their mutual wants supplied, in such orderly intercourse as characterizes an improved state of society, but their industry was daily rendered persevering and inventive.

The distinction of rank, established in the Mexican empire, is the next circumstance that merits attention. The great body of the people were in a most humiliating state. A considerable number, known by the name of *mayerques*, nearly resembled in condition those peasants, who, under various denominations, were considered, during the prevalence of the feudal system in Europe, as instruments of labour attached to the soil. The *mayerques* could not change their place of residence, without permission of the superior on whom they depended. They were conveyed, together with the lands on which they were settled, like the boors, at the present day, in Russia, from one proprietor to another, and were bound to cultivate the ground, and to perform various kinds of servile work. Others were reduced to the lowest form of subjection, that of domestic servitude, and felt the utmost rigour of that wretched state. Their condition was held to be so vile, that a person who killed one of these slaves was not subjected to any punishment.—The nobles, possessed of ample territories, were divided into various classes, to each of which belonged peculiar titles of honour. Some of these titles, like their lands, descended from father to son, in perpetual succession. Others were annexed to particular offices, or conferred, during life, as marks of personal distinction.

Thus, the distinction of ranks was completely established, in a line of regular subordination, reaching from the highest



to the lowest member of the community. Each of these knew what he could claim, and what he owed. The people, who were not allowed to wear a dress of the same fashion, or to dwell in houses of a form similar to those of the nobles, accosted them with the most submissive reverence. In the presence of their sovereign, they durst not lift their eyes from the ground, or look him in the face. The nobles themselves, when admitted to an audience of their sovereigns, entered bare-footed, and, as his slaves, paid him homage, approaching to adoration. This respect, due from inferior, to those above them in rank, was prescribed with so ceremonious accuracy, that it incorporated with the language, and influenced its genius and idiom. The Mexican language abounded in expressions of reverence and courtesy. The style and appellations, used in the intercourse between equals, would have been so unbecoming in the mouth of one in a lower sphere, when he accosted a person in higher rank, as to be deemed an insult.\*

Their mode of computing time may be considered as a more decisive evidence of their progress in improvement. They divided the year into eighteen months, each consisting of twenty days, amounting, in all, to three hundred-and-sixty. But, as they observed that the course of the sun was not completed in that time, they added five days to the year. These, which were properly intercalary days, they termed *supernumerary*, or *waste*; and, as they did not belong to any month, no work was done, and no sacred rite performed on them. They were devoted wholly to festivity and pastime.

Such, are the most striking particulars in the manners and policy of the Mexicans, which exhibit them to view as a people considerably refined. But, from other circumstances, we cannot avoid suspecting, that their character, and many of their institutions, did not differ greatly from those of the other inhabitants of America.

\* The Mexican is the only language, in which a termination indicating respect, may be affixed to every word. By adding the syllable *zin* or *azin* to any word, it becomes a proper expression of veneration in the mouth of an inferior. If, in speaking to an equal, the word Father is to be used, it is *Tatl*; but an inferior says *Tatzin*. One priest speaking to another, calls him *Teopixque*; a person of inferior rank calls him *Teopixcatzin*. The name of the emperor who reigned when Cortes invaded Mexico, was *Montezuma*; but his vassals, from reverence, pronounced it *Montezumazin*. The Mexicans had not only reverential nouns, but reverential verbs. — See Guevara's Mexican Grammar.



Like the rude tribes around them, the Mexicans were incessantly engaged in war; and the motives which prompted them to hostility seem to have been the same. They fought in order to gratify their vengeance, by shedding the blood of their enemies. In battle, they were intent chiefly on taking prisoners, and it was by the number of these that they estimated the glory of victory. Their funeral rites were not less bloody than those of the most savage tribes. On the death of any distinguished personage, especially of the emperor, a certain number of his attendants were chosen to accompany him to the other world; and those unfortunate victims were put to death without mercy, and buried in the same tomb.

The empire of Peru boasts of a higher antiquity than that of Mexico. According to the traditionary accounts collected by the Spaniards, it had subsisted four-hundred years, under twelve successive monarchs. But the knowledge of their ancient history which the Peruvians could communicate to their conquerors, must have been both imperfect and uncertain. Like the other American nations, they were wholly unacquainted with the art of writing, and therefore destitute of the only means by which the memory of past transactions can, with any degree of accuracy, be preserved.

The *quipos*, or knots on cords, of different colours, celebrated by authors fond of the marvellous, as if they had been regular annals of the empire, imperfectly supplied the place of writing. According to the obscure description of them, by Acosta, the quipos seem to have been a device for rendering calculation more expeditious and accurate. By the various colours, different objects were denoted; and by each knot a distinct number. Thus, an account was taken, and a kind of register kept, of the inhabitants in each province, or of the several productions collected there for public use. But, as by these knots, however varied or combined, no moral or abstract idea, no operation or quality of the mind, could be represented, they contributed little towards preserving the memory of ancient events and institutions.

The most singular and striking circumstance in the Peruvian government, is the influence of religion upon its genius and laws. Amongst the Mexicans, religion, reduced into a regular system, and holding a considerable place in their public institutions, operated, with conspicuous efficacy, in forming the peculiar character of that people. But in Peru, the whole system of policy was founded on religion. The

Inca appeared not only as a legislator, but as the messenger of heaven. His precepts were received, not merely as the injunctions of a superior, but as the mandates of the Deity. His race was to be held sacred; and, in order to preserve it distinct, and unpolluted by any mixture of less noble blood, the sons of Manco Capac married their own sisters, and no person was ever admitted to the throne, who could not claim it by so pure a descent. To those Children of the Sun—for that was the appellation conferred upon all the offspring of the first Inca—the people looked up with the reverence due to beings of a superior order. The persons of highest rank and highest power in their dominions, acknowledged them to be of a more exalted nature; and, in testimony of this, when admitted into their presence, they entered with a burthen on their shoulders, as an emblem of their servitude, and willingness to bear whatever the Inca was pleased to impose. Amongst their subjects, force was not requisite to second their commands. Every officer intrusted with their execution was revered, and might proceed, alone, from one extremity of the empire to another, without meeting opposition; for, on producing a fringe from the royal *borla*, an ornament of the head, peculiar to the reigning Inca, the lives and fortunes of the people were at his disposal.

Another consequence of establishing government in Peru on the foundation of religion, was, that all crimes were punished with death. They were not considered as transgressions of human laws, but as insults offered to the Deity. Each, without any distinction of such as were slight, and such as were atrocious, called for vengeance, and could be expiated only by the blood of the offender. But the Peruvians, of simple manners and unsuspecting faith, were held in so great awe by this rigid discipline, that the number of offenders was extremely small.

“The system of superstition,” observes a philosophical historian, “on which the Incas ingrafted their pretensions to so high authority, was of a genius very different from that established amongst the Mexicans. Manco Capac turned the attention of his followers, entirely towards natural objects. The Sun, as the great source of light, of joy, and fertility in the creation, attracted their principal homage. The Moon and the Stars, as co-operating with him, were entitled to secondary honours. Wherever the propensity in the human mind to acknowledge and to adore some superior power, takes

this direction, and is employed in contemplating the order and beneficence that really exist in nature, the spirit of superstition is mild. Wherever imaginary beings, created by the fancy and the fears of men, are supposed to preside in nature, and become the object of worship, superstition always assumes a more severe and atrocious form. Of the latter, we have an example amongst the Mexicans; of the former, amongst the people of Peru. The Peruvians had not, indeed, made such progress in observation or inquiry, as to have attained just conceptions of the Deity; nor was there, in their language, any proper name or appellation of the Supreme Power, which intimated that they had formed any idea of him as the creator and governor of the world. But, by directing their veneration to that glorious luminary, which, by its universal and vivifying energy, is the best emblem of divine beneficence, the rites and observances which they deemed acceptable to him were innocent and humane. They offered to the Sun a part of their productions which his genial warmth had called forth from the bosom of the earth, and reared to maturity. They sacrificed, as an oblation of gratitude, some of the animals which were indebted to his influence for nourishment. They presented to him choice specimens of those works of ingenuity, which his light had guided the hand of man in forming. But the Incas never stained his altars with human blood, nor could they conceive that their beneficent father, the Sun, would be delighted with such horrid victims."

Even the wars in which the Incas engaged, were conducted with a spirit very different from that of other American nations. They fought not like savages, to destroy and exterminate; or, like the Mexicans, to glut blood-thirsty divinities with human sacrifices. They conquered, in order to reclaim and civilize the vanquished, and to diffuse the knowledge of their own institutions and arts.

The state of property in Peru, was no less singular than that of religion, and contributed, likewise, in giving a mild turn of character to the people. All the lands, capable of cultivation, were divided into three shares. One was consecrated to the Sun, and the product of it was applied to the erection of temples, and furnishing what was requisite for celebrating the public rites of religion. The second belonged to the Incas, and was set apart as the provision made by the community for the support of government. The third, and largest share, was reserved for the maintenance of the

people, amongst whom it was divided. Neither individuals, however, nor communities, had a right of exclusive property in the portion set apart for their use. Like the ancient Germans, they possessed it only for a year, at the expiration of which a new division was made, in proportion to the rank, the number, and the exigencies of each family. All those lands were cultivated by the joint industry of the community. The people, summoned by a proper officer, repaired, in a body, to the fields, and performed their common task, while songs and musical instruments cheered them to their labour.

The distinction of ranks was fully established in Peru. A great body of the inhabitants, under the denomination of *Yanaconas*, were held in a state of servitude. Their garb and their houses were of a form different from those of freemen. Like the Tamenes of Mexico, they were employed in carrying burthens, and in performing every other work of drudgery. Next to them in rank, were such of the people as were free, but distinguished by no official or hereditary honours. Above them, were raised those whom the Spaniards called *Orejones*, from the ornaments worn in their ears. They formed what may be denominated the order of nobles, and in peace as well as in war, held every office of power or trust. At the head of all, were the Children of the Sun, who, by their high descent, and peculiar privileges, were as much exalted above the *Orejones*, as these were elevated above the people.

Those distinctions in ranks were favourable to the progress of the arts. But the Spaniards, having been acquainted with the improved state of various arts in Mexico, several years before they discovered Peru, were not so much struck with what they observed in the latter country, and describe the appearance of ingenuity there with less warmth of admiration. The Peruvians, nevertheless, had advanced far beyond the Mexicans, both in the necessary arts of life, and in such as have some title to the name of elegant.

In Peru, agriculture was more extensive, and more skillfully conducted, than in any other part of America. But the use of the plough was unknown to the Peruvians. They turned up the earth with a kind of mattock, made of hard wood. Nor was this labour deemed so degrading, as to be assigned wholly to the women. Both sexes joined in performing this necessary work. Even the Children of the Sun set an example of industry, by cultivating a field near Cuzco.



with their own hands, and they dignified this function by denominating it "their triumph over the earth."

The superior ingenuity of the Peruvians, is obvious, likewise, in the construction of their dwelling-houses and public buildings. The former were generally of a square form, the walls about eight feet high, built with bricks hardened in the fire, without any windows, and the doors low and strait. But it was in the temples dedicated to the Sun, and in the buildings destined for the residence of their monarchs, that the Peruvians displayed the utmost extent of their art and contrivance. They appear to have been edifices various in their dimensions. Some were of a moderate size; many, of immense extent; all, remarkable for solidity, and resembling each other in the style of their architecture. The temple of Pachacmac, together with a palace of the Inca, and a fortress, were so connected, as to form one great structure, above half a league in circuit.

These, however, were not the noblest or most useful works of the Incas. The two great roads from Cuzco to Quito, extending, in an uninterrupted line, above fifteen-hundred miles, are entitled to still higher praise. Eminences were levelled, and hollows filled up; and, for their preservation, they were fenced with a bank of turf. At proper distances, *tambos*, or store-houses were erected, for the accommodation of the Inca and his attendants, in their progress through his dominions.

The formation of those roads introduced another improvement in Peru, equally unknown over all the rest of America. In its course from north to south, the road of the Incas was intersected by all the torrents which roll from the Andes towards the Pacific Ocean. From the rapidity of their course, as well as from the frequency and violence of their inundation, these were not fordable. Some expedient, however, was to be found for passing them. They formed cables of great strength, by twisting together pliable withs or osiers: six of these cables, they stretched across the stream, parallel to one another, and made them fast on each side. These, they bound firmly together, by interweaving smaller ropes, so closely, as to form a compact piece of net-work, which being covered with branches of trees and earth, they passed along it with tolerable security. Proper persons were appointed to attend at each bridge, to keep it in repair, and to assist passengers. In the level country, where the rivers became deep, and broad, and still, they were passed in *bal-*

zas, or rafts; in the construction, as well as navigation of which, the ingenuity of the Peruvians appears to have been far superior to that of any other people in America. The other nations had advanced no farther in naval skill, than the use of the paddle, or oar: the Peruvians ventured to raise a mast, and spread a sail, by means of which their balzas not only went nimbly before the wind, but could also veer and tack.

Nor were the ingenuity and art of the Peruvians confined solely to objects of essential utility. They had made some progress in arts which may be termed elegant. They possessed the precious metals in greater abundance than any other of the Indian nations. They had discovered the art of smelting and refining these, either by the simple application of fire, or, where the ore was more stubborn, and impregnated with foreign substances, by placing it in small ovens or furnaces, on high grounds, so artificially constructed, that the draught of air performed the function of bellows, an engine with which they were totally unacquainted.

In works of mere curiosity or ornament, their ingenuity has been highly celebrated. Many specimens of those have been dug out of the *guacas*, or mounds of earth, with which the Peruvians covered the bodies of the dead. Amongst these, are mirrors of various dimensions, of hard, shining stones, highly polished; vessels of earthenware, of different forms; hatchets, and other instruments; some destined for war, and others for labour. Some were of flint, some of copper, hardened to such a degree, by a process now unknown, as, on several occasions, to supply the place of iron. Had the use of those tools formed of copper been general, the progress of the Peruvians in the arts might have been such, as to emulate that of more cultivated nations. But either the metal was so rare, or the operation by which it was hardened so tedious, that their instruments of copper were few, and so extremely small, that they seem to have been employed only in works of a slight kind.

## CHAPTER XIV.

HISTORY OF THE DESCENDANTS OF COLUMBUS—THE MALE LINE BECOMES EXTINCT, AND THE DIGNITIES AND WEALTH OF THE GREAT DISCOVERER, PASS INTO A BRANCH OF THE FAMILY OF BRAGANZA.

WHEN Don Diego Columbus died, his wife and family were at St. Domingo.\* He left two sons—Luis and Christopher; and three daughters—Maria, who afterwards married Don Sancho de Cordona; Juana, who married Don Luis de Cueva; and Isabella, who married Don George of Portugal, Count of Guelves.

After the death of Don Diego, his spirited vice-queen, left with a number of young children, endeavoured to assert and maintain the rights of her family. She accordingly sailed for Spain, to protect the claim of her eldest son, Don Luis, then six years of age. Charles V., who succeeded his grandfather on the throne of Spain, in 1516, was then absent from the kingdom, but she was most graciously received by the empress. The title of "Admiral of the Indies" was immediately conferred upon Don Luis, and the emperor augmented his revenues, and conferred other favours upon the family. Charles, however, could never be prevailed on to give Don Luis the title of viceroy, although he had passed a decree some years previous to the death of his father, recognizing his right to that dignity. Finally, in 1540, Don Luis relinquished all pretensions to the vice-royalty of the new world, receiving, in its stead, the titles of Duke of Veragua and Marquis of Jamaica. He commuted also the claim to a tenth of the produce of the Indies, for a pension of one-thousand doubloons of gold.

Don Luis did not long survive this commutation. He died shortly afterwards, leaving no other male issue than an illegitimate son, named Christopher. He left two daughters by his wife, Donna Maria de Mosquera; one named Phillippa, and the other Maria, who became a nun in the convent of St. Quirce, at Valladolid.

\* See note, p. 76.

Don Luis, having no legitimate son, was succeeded by his nephew Diego, son to his brother Christopher. Diego, who married his cousin Phillippa, died, without issue, in 1578; and with him the legitimate male line of Columbus became extinct.

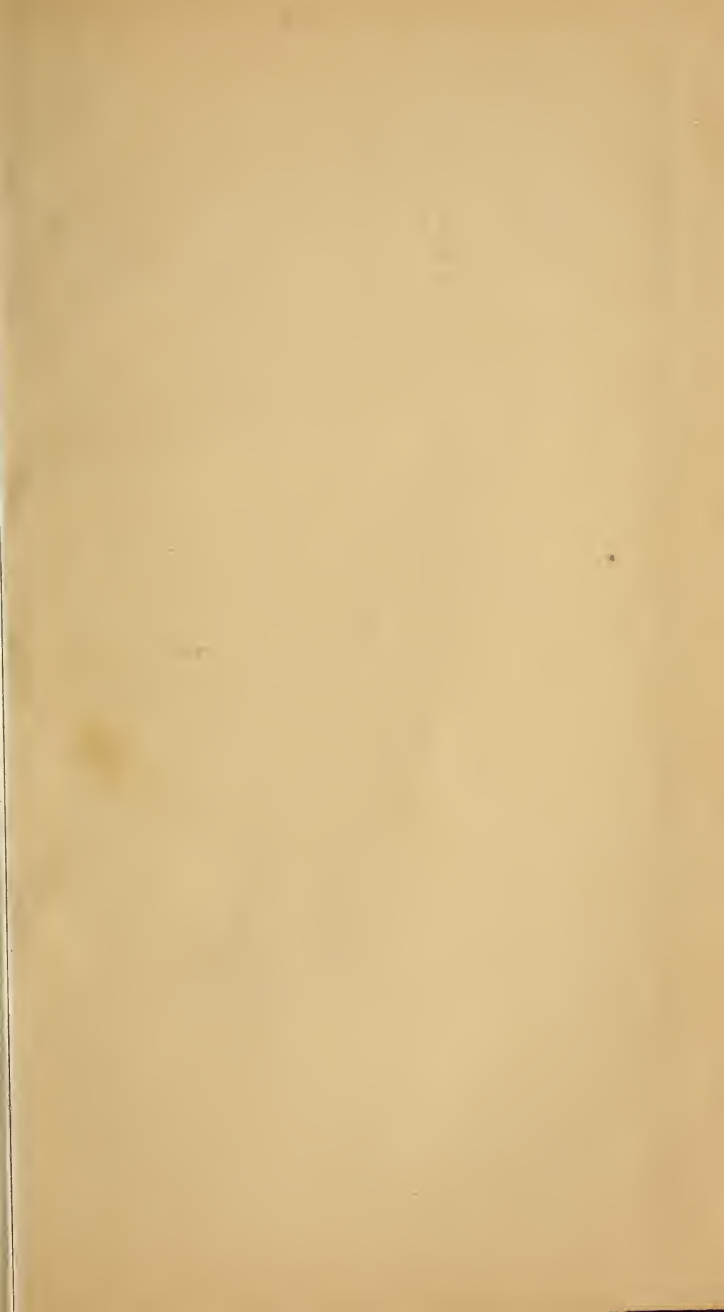
One of the most important law-suits now arose, that the world had ever witnessed, for the estates and dignities descended from Columbus. Not fewer claimants appeared, than in the time of Bruce, contended for the Scottish throne. The cause was finally decided in 1608. The male line was declared to be extinct. Don Nuno Guelves de Portugallo was put in possession, and became Duke of Veragua. He was a grandson of Isabella, third daughter of Don Diego (son of the discoverer) by his vice-queen Donna Maria de Toledo.

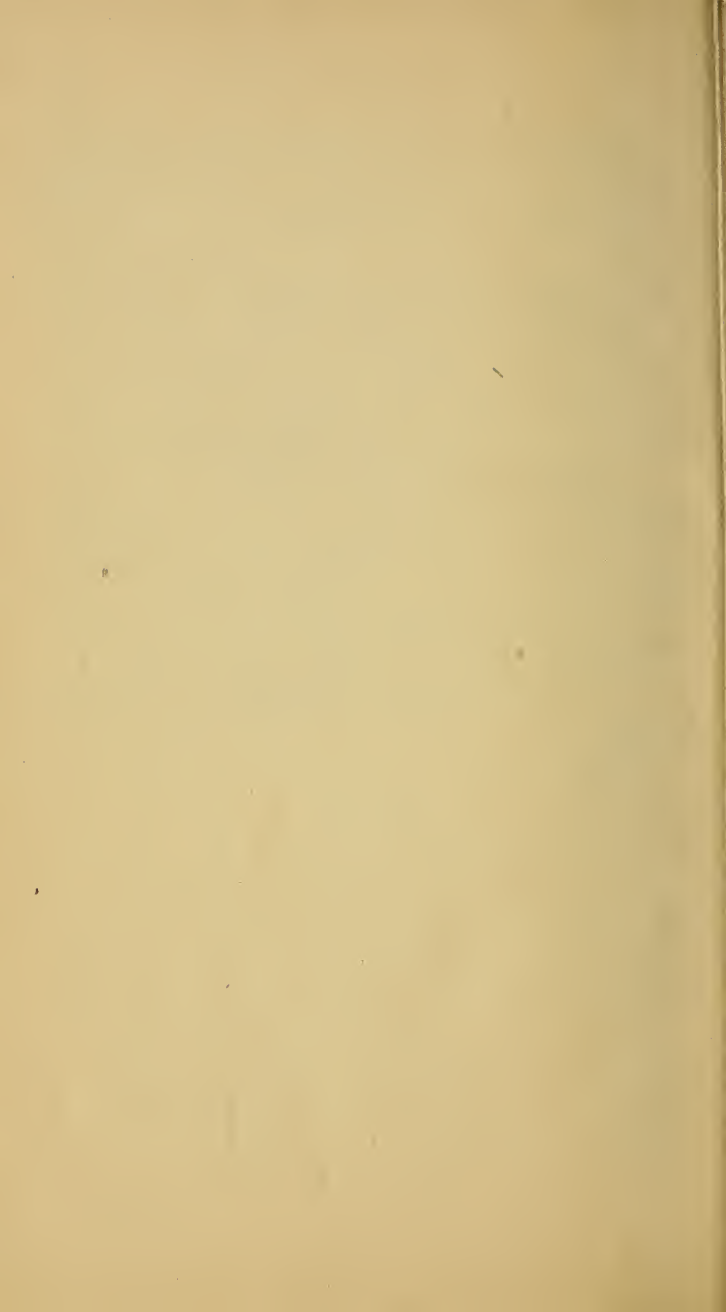
The descendants of the two eldest sisters of Isabella had a prior claim, but their lines became extinct, previous to the decision of the process. The Isabella just named had married Don George of Portugal, Count of Guelves; and thus the dignities and wealth of Columbus passed into a branch of the Portuguese house of Braganza, established in Spain.

Fernando Columbus, the illegitimate son and the historian of the admiral, died at Seville, unmarried and without issue, on the 12th of July, 1539, in his fifty-first year.

THE END.















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